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# THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT 1660-1789

BY

A. H. JOHNSON, M.A.

LATE FELLOW OF ALL SOULS COLLEGE, OXFORD

REVISED BY HIS SON AND BY

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WITH ELEVEN MAPS



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## PREFACE

THE period covered by this volume naturally falls into two sections.

During the first (1660-1715) the chief subjects of interest are the ascendancy of France in Western Europe, that of Sweden in the North, and that of the Habsburgs, against the Turks in the South-East.

During the second (1715-1789) we mark the decline of those three powers, and the rise of Prussia, Russia, and England.

The whole age is one of intricate diplomacy, and of incessant wars, and yet it is one of great interest. The wars, no longer caused by religious dissensions, were waged, often ostensibly to maintain the balance of power, but really in the pursuit of national aims, to gain independence, for the acquisition of territory, or for the advancement of commercial and colonial interests. In every country except in England, where real power lay in the hands of a landowning and commercial aristocracy, these national interests were represented by absolute monarchs or their ministers.

Thus we are introduced to many striking personalities who, with all their failings, did great things for the country under their rule. As we draw to the end, however, we are forced to acknowledge that their day is over. The eighteenth century was to close with the outbreak of the French Revolution—a revolution in which France was the first to break violently with the past, and to help give to Europe these new ideas of government which have to a great extent triumphed in our own day.

Want of space has prevented any consecutive treatment of English History, and it would be well that some book on the subject should be studied alongside of the present volume.

ALL SOULS COLLEGE  
*January 1909*

A. H. J.



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## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

1643 May.	Accession of Louis XIV.
1648.	Peace of Westphalia.
	Outbreak of the War of the Fronde.
1649.	Execution of Charles I of England.
1650.	Death of William II, Stadholder of Holland.
1653.	End of the War of the Fronde.
1654.	Accession of Charles X of Sweden.
1656.	Mahomed Kiuprili, Grand Vizier.
1658.	Leopold I elected Emperor.
1659.	Treaty of the Pyrenees.
13 Feb.	Death of Charles X of Sweden—Accession of Charles XI.
1660 May.	Restoration of Charles II of England.
	Treaty of Oliva.
June.	Treaty of Copenhagen.
July.	Treaty of Kardis.
1661 Mar.	Death of Mazarin—Louis XIV rules directly.
	Achmet Kiuprili, Grand Vizier.
1664 Aug.	The Turks defeated at St. Gothard—Peace of Vasvar.
1665.	English war against Holland.
Jan.	Peace of Andrussovo.
1667 May.	The Devolution War.
July.	Peace of Breda between England and Holland.
Aug.	Fall of Clarendon—The Cabal.
1668 Jan.	The Triple Alliance—England, Holland, Sweden.
	Portuguese independence acknowledged by Spain.
May.	Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.
1669 Sept.	Venice surrenders Crete to the Turks.
1670 June.	The Secret Treaty of Dover.
1672 April.	The Dutch War.
July.	William of Orange made Stadholder.
Aug.	Murder of De Witt.
1674 Feb.	Treaty of Westminster—England retires from Third Dutch War.
May.	John Sobieski proclaimed King of Poland.*
July.	League of Leopold—Spain and Holland against France.
1675 Jan.	Great Elector defeats Charles XI at Fehrbellin.



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Treaty of Zurawno.  
Death of Achmet Kiuprili—Succeeded as Grand Vizier by Kara Mustapha.  
Peace of Nimeguen.  
Accession of Charles XII of Sweden.  
Chambres de Réunion.  
The Exclusion Bill.  
Secret Treaty between Charles II and Louis XIV.  
Declaration of the Four Articles.  
Death of Colbert.  
Vienna relieved.  
The Holy League against the Turk.  
Revocation of Edict of Nantes.  
League of Augsburg.  
Victory at Mohacs over the Turks.  
Venice seizes Athens and Corinth.  
Great Elector succeeded by Frederick III in Brandenburg.  
War of the League of Augsburg.  
Louis invades the Palatinate.  
William III lands at Torbay.  
Flight of James II.  
Peter the Great overthrows Sophia.  
James II defeated at the battle of the Boyne.  
Duke of Savoy defeated at Staffarda.  
Turks defeated at Szalankemen.  
French navy defeated at La Hogue.  
French take Namur.  
William III defeated at Steinkirk.  
William III defeated at Neerwinden.  
William III retakes Namur.  
Death of John Sobieski.  
Peter takes Azof.  
Treaty of Turin—Duke of Savoy joins France.  
Eugène wins the battle of Zenta.  
Accession of Charles XII of Sweden.  
Peace of Ryswick.  
First Partition Treaty.  
Peace of Carlowitz.  
League of Russia, Denmark and Poland against Charles XII of Sweden.  
Second Partition Treaty.  
Death of Charles II of Spain.  
Charles XII defeats Peter at Narva.  
The Elector Frederick crowned King in Prussia.  
The Grand Alliance and the War of the Spanish Succession.

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1702 Mar.	Death of William III—Accession of Anne.
May.	Methuen Treaty—Portugal joins the Allies.
1703 Sept.	Victory of Villars at Höchstadt.
1704 4 Aug.	The English take Gibraltar.
13 Aug.	Marlborough's victory at Blenheim.
1705 May.	Emperor Leopold I dies—Succeeded by Joseph I.
12 May.	Marlborough's victory at Ramillies.
1706 July.	Augustus of Poland deposed—Stanislas Leszczinski elected.
7 Sept.	Eugène wins battle of Turin.
14 Sept.	Treaty of Altranstadt.
1707 April.	Berwick defeats the Allies at Almanza.
1708 11 July.	Marlborough's victory at Oudenarde.
8 July.	Peter defeats Charles XII at Pultawa—Augustus restored to the Polish throne.
1709 4 Sept.	Marlborough's victory at Malplaquet.
1710 10 Dec. }	Battles of Brihuega and Villa Viciosa.
20 Dec. }	
1711 April.	Death of the Emperor Joseph I.
July.	Treaty of the Pruth—Peter surrenders Azof.
Dec.	Archduke Charles elected Emperor.
1712 July.	The English withdraw from the war.
1713 Feb.	Frederick I of Prussia succeeded by Frederick William I.
April.	Peace of Utrecht—End of War of Spanish Succession.
Sept.	The Bull <i>Unigenitus</i> condemns the Jansenists.
1715 1 Sept.	Death of Louis XIV—Accession of Louis XV.
	Philip of Orleans Regent.
1717 Jan.	The Triple Alliance.
	The Mississippi Scheme.
1718 July.	Treaty of Passarovitz.
Aug.	Byng defeats the Spanish fleet off Cape Passaro.
	Treaty of London.
Dec.	Death of Charles XII of Sweden.
1720 April.	Ministry of Walpole and Townshend.
1721 Aug.	Peace of Nystadt between Sweden and Russia.
1723 Dec.	Death of Philip of Orleans—End of the Regency.
	Duke of Bourbon Minister in France.
1725 Feb.	Death of Peter the Great—Catherine I succeeds.
April.	Treaty of Vienna.
Sept.	Treaty of Hanover.
1726 May.	Fall of Ripperda.
	Catherine of Russia succeeded by Peter II.
June.	Cardinal Fleury succeeds Duke of Bourbon as French Minister.
Oct.	Treaty of Wusterhausen.
1727 July.	George I succeeded by George II in England.

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1729	Nov.	Treaty of Seville.
1730	Feb.	Peter II of Russia succeeded by Anna.
1731	July.	Second Treaty of Vienna.
1733.		War of the Polish Succession.
	Sept.	League of Turin.
	Oct.	Frederick Augustus II elected King of Poland.
	Nov.	Treaty of the Escorial (First Family Compact).
1735	Oct.	Third Treaty of Vienna (confirmed 1738)
1739	Sept.	Treaty of Belgrade.
1740	May.	Frederick William I of Prussia succeeded by Frederick the Great.
	Oct.	Death of Emperor Charles VI.
		Anna of Russia succeeded by Ivan.
1740	Dec.	Frederick the Great seizes Silesia.
1741	April.	Prussian victory at Mollwitz.
	May.	Treaty of Nymphenburg.
	June.	Treaty of Breslau.
	Oct.	Treaty of Klein-Schnellendorf.
	Dec.	Elizabeth of Russia succeeds Ivan.
1742	Jan.	Charles Albert of Bavaria elected Emperor as Charles VII.
	Feb.	Walpole succeeded by Carteret in England.
	May.	Prussian victory at Chotusitz.
1743	Jan.	Death of Cardinal Fleury.
	June.	Allied victory at Dettingen.
	July.	Treaty of Berlin—End of First Silesian War.
	Sept.	Treaty of Worms.
1744	Feb.	Naval battle off Toulon.
	May.	Union of Frankfurt—Beginning of Second Silesian War.
	Oct.	Treaty of Fontainebleau (Second Family Compact).
1745	Jan.	Death of Emperor Charles VII.
	Mar.	Treaty of Füssen.
	May.	French victory at Fontenoy.
	June.	Prussian victory at Hohenfriedberg.
	Aug.	Francis of Lorraine, husband of Maria Theresa, elected Emperor.
	Sept.	Prussian victory at Sohr.
	Dec.	Prussian victory at Kesselsdorf.
		Treaty of Dresden—End of Second Silesian War.
1746	April.	Young Pretender defeated at Culloden.
	July.	Philip V of Spain succeeded by Ferdinand VI.
1747	May.	Anson's victory off Cape Finisterre.
	Oct.	Hawke's victory off Cape Finisterre.
1748	April-Oct.	Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.
		End of War of the Austrian Succession.
1750.		Kaunitz Ambassador at Paris.
1753.		Kaunitz becomes Chancellor.

1753 Sept.	Clive takes Arcot.
1754.	Recall of Dupleix.
1755 July.	Defeat of General Braddock near Fort Duquesne.
1756 Jan.	Convention of Westminster between England and Prussia.
May.	England declares war against France.
	First Treaty of Versailles.
Aug.	Frederick occupies Saxony.
	Opening of Seven Years' War.
	French capture Minorca.
Oct.	Indecisive battle of Lobositz.
1757 Jan.	The Imperial Diet declares war on Frederick.
	Elizabeth of Russia makes Convention of St. Petersburg with Austria.
2 May.	Second Treaty of Versailles.
	Frederick's victory at Prague.
June.	Frederick defeated at Kolin.
July.	Duke of Cumberland defeated at Hastenbeck.
Aug.	Russian victory at Gross Jägerndorf.
Sept.	Convention of Kloster Seven.
Nov.	Frederick's victory at Rossbach.
1757 Dec.	Frederick's victory at Leuthen.
1758 Aug.	Frederick's victory at Zorndorf.
	Frederick defeated at Hochkirch.
1759 Aug.	Choiseul succeeds Bernis as French Foreign Minister.
	Charles III succeeds Ferdinand VI in Spain.
	Frederick defeated at Künersdorf.
	English victory at Minden.
Sept.	Quebec taken by the English.
	Jesuits expelled from Portugal.
Nov.	Hawke's victory at Quiberon.
1760 Jan.	English victory at Wandewash.
Aug.	Frederick wins battle of Liegnitz.
Sept.	Surrender of Montreal.
Oct.	George II succeeded by George III.
Nov.	Frederick wins battle of Torgau.
1761 Aug.	The Third Family Compact.
Oct.	Chatham succeeded by the Earl of Bute.
1762 Jan.	Elizabeth of Russia succeeded by Peter III.
July.	Peter III deposed and murdered—Catherine II succeeds as Tzarina.
1763 Feb.	Peaces of Hubertsburg and Paris—End of Seven Years' War.
1763 Oct.	Death of Augustus II of Poland.
	Archduke Joseph elected King of the Romans.
1764 Sept.	Stanislas Poniatowski elected King of Poland.
1765 Aug.	Death of the Emperor Francis I—Joseph II Emperor.

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- 1765 Sept. Joseph declared co-Regent with his mother, Maria Theresa.
1767. Jesuits expelled from France.
- 1768 Oct. War between Russia and Turkey.
- 1770 April. Choiseul succeeded by the Duke d'Aiguillon.
1771. Accession of Gustavus III of Sweden.
- July. Jesuits abolished by Clement XIV.
- 1772 Aug. Treaty of St. Petersburg—First Partition of Poland. The *Coup d'état* of Gustavus III.
- 1774 May. Louis XVI succeeds Louis XV—Vergennes Foreign Minister—Turgot Comptroller-General.
- July. Treaty of Kütschuk Kainardji.
- 1775 May. War of American Independence begins.
- 1776 May. Turgot dismissed—Succeeded by Necker.
- Oct. Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga.
- 1777 Dec. Death of Maximilian Joseph, Elector of Bavaria.
- 1778 Feb. France joins the American Colonies against England.
- 1779 May. Peace of Teschen.
- 1780 Nov. Death of Maria Theresa—Joseph sole ruler.
- 1781 May. Necker dismissed.
- Oct. Cornwallis capitulates at York Town.
- 1782 12 April. Rodney's victory in West Indies.
- Oct. Howe's relief of Gibraltar.
- 1783 Jan. Treaty of Versailles—England recognizes the independence of the American Colonies and makes peace with France.
- Dec. Calonne appointed Comptroller-General.
- 1785 Nov. Treaty of Fontainebleau.
- The League of the Princes.
- 1786 Aug. Frederick the Great succeeded by Frederick William II.
- 1787 Feb. Death of Vergennes.
- Joseph declares war against Turkey.
- April. Calonne dismissed.
- 1787 Aug. Turkey declares war against Russia.
- 1788 July. The Triple Alliance—England, Prussia, Holland.
- Aug. Necker recalled.
- 1789 May. Meeting of the States-General.
- Beginning of the French Revolution.
- 1790 Feb. Death of Joseph II—Leopold II succeeds in Austria.
- July. Treaty of Reichenbach.
- Leopold II elected Emperor.
- 1791 Aug. Peace of Sistovo.
- 1792 Jan. Peace of Jassy.
- Mar. Leopold II succeeded by Francis II.
- \* April. Opening of the War of the French Revolution.

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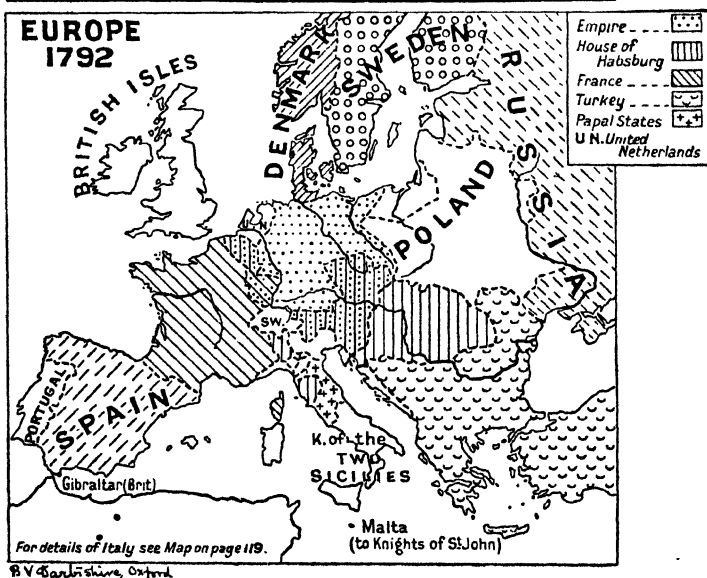
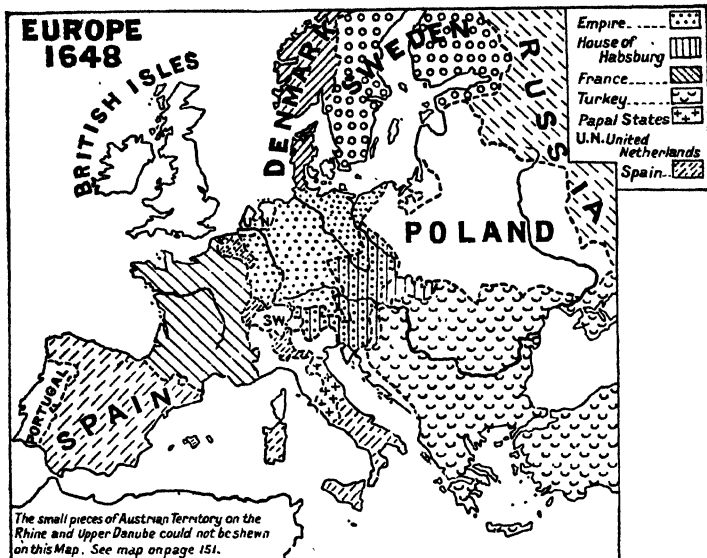
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## **THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT**



# THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

1660-1789

## CHAPTER I

### LOUIS XIV AND THE REFORMS OF COLBERT

**W**HEN on the death of Mazarin in March 1661 Louis XIV assumed the direct government of France, her predominance in Western Europe seemed well assured.

POSITION OF  
FRANCE IN 1661

By the Peace of Westphalia (1648) and the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659), she had acquired possessions of the greatest value. By the former, her old-claims to the three Bishoprics of Lorraine, Metz, Toul and Verdun, were definitely acknowledged and she was allowed to garrison Philipsburg, on the right bank of the Rhine. In Alsace she gained the town of Breisach on the right bank of the Rhine, the Sundgau in Upper Alsace, the prefecture of ten Imperial cities, and all the Austrian rights over Upper and Lower Alsace, though the territories belonging to the Bishoprics of Basle and Strassburg remained independent. In Italy she kept Pinerolo.

At the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659) she regained from Spain Roussillon and Cerdagne, which completed her boundary on the South. On the East she secured most of Artois, part of Flanders, of Hainault and of Luxemburg, and additional possessions in Lorraine. Finally, the marriage of Louis XIV with Maria Theresa, the eldest daughter of the King of

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Spain, was, as we shall see, to give her further claims in the future.<sup>1</sup>

The importance of these acquisitions will be best understood by reference to the map opposite. Those in Artois, Flanders, Hainault and Luxemburg gave her strong places, which could be made the basis of future advance towards the Spanish Netherlands. Those in Lorraine practically placed that Duchy in her hands, as well as the control of the great roads to the Rhine and the passage over the Meuse and Moselle rivers. Those in Alsace advanced her boundary to the Rhine itself. Finally, Pinerolo commanded the important pass of St. Genèvre from Dauphiné over the Alps into Piedmont, and brought her within striking distance of Milan.

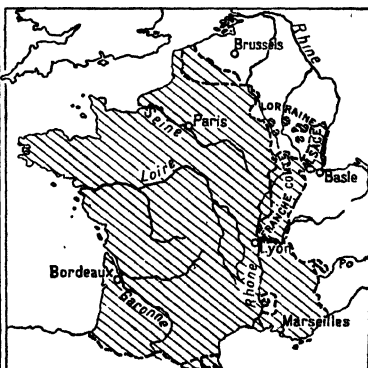
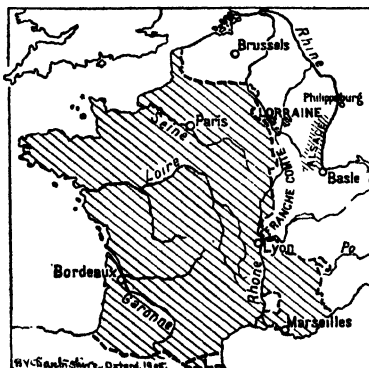
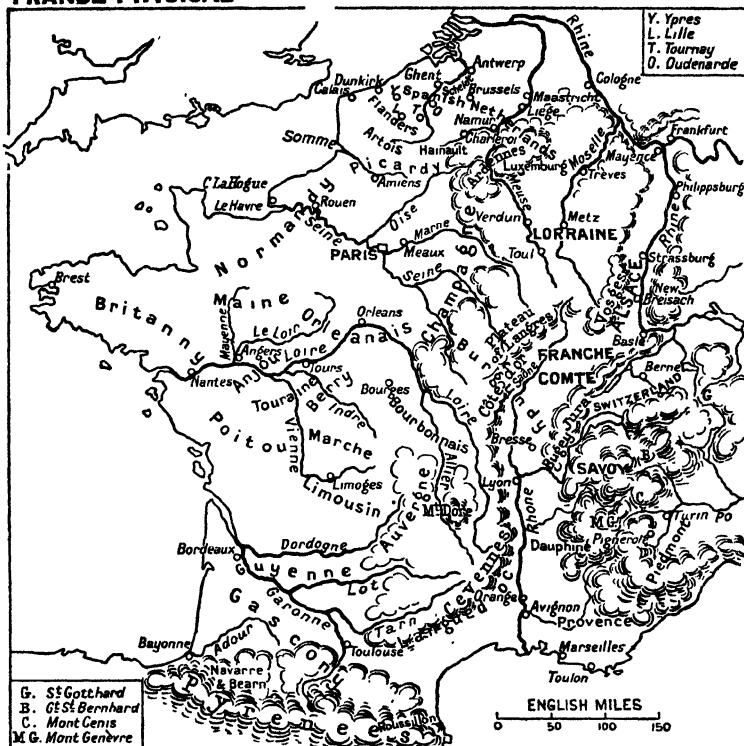
Nor was this all. Of the territories which lay thus exposed to her attack, those parts of Alsace and Lorraine which France had not acquired belonged to the Empire, then under the rule of Leopold I, the head of the Austrian branch of the House of Habsburg, while the Spanish Netherlands, Franche Comté and Milan were in the hands of the Spanish line of the same house, represented by Philip IV of Spain; yet of these representatives of the House of Habsburg neither was in a position to defend them effectually.

As a result of the Thirty Years' War the Empire had slipped from the Emperor's grasp. The Electors and the CONDITION OF THE EMPIRE greater Princes, though still nominally subject to the Emperor and the Imperial Diet, had established their virtual independence by obtaining, in addition to all the other sovereign rights they already possessed, the right of concluding alliances with foreign powers. The Emperor, deserted by most of the Princes, could only offer an ineffectual resistance to French aggression and was further distracted from his Western front by having to arrest the advance of the Turks in Hungary.

Thus Germany, which had never been a united kingdom, had now become a loose confederation of states large and small, each too much intent on the advancement of its own interests to unite against France, yet too weak to resist alone. The want of cohesion had been further aggravated

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 20-21, 41.

# FRANCE PHYSICAL





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by the conclusion of the League of the Rhine (1658). This was composed of the three ecclesiastical Electors, the Archbishops of Mayence, Trèves and Cologne, who were Catholic ; of the Protestant Duke of Brunswick, the Landgrave of Hesse, and the King of Sweden as Duke of Bremen and Verden, and was placed under the protection of France.

The League had as its alleged objects the maintenance of the terms of the Peace of Westphalia, and the protection of the rights and privileges of its members, but its effect was still further to weaken the Empire, and it gave France the pretext for constant interference in German affairs, and made her influence in Germany almost as great as that of the Emperor himself.

Meanwhile Spain was in rapid decay, the country ruined by religious bigotry and commercial exclusiveness, and the ruling family effete. That the magnificent position thus held by France would tempt her to further aggression can scarce cause surprise, especially when we remember that her destinies were in the hands of an ambitious king in his twenty-third year.

Louis XIV was one of the ablest men of his generation. To an excellent memory and a remarkable knowledge of the conditions of Europe, he added an immense capacity for work, great fertility of resource, diplomatic gifts of a high order, and unwearied patience in the pursuit of his policy. He was served at the opening of his reign by Colbert, a master of finance ; by Lionne, an acute diplomatist ; by Turenne, the greatest strategist of his age ; by Condé, a brilliant tactician and cavalry leader ; and by Vauban, of whom it is said that he never lost a fortress which he defended, or besieged one without taking it.

In no country of Europe was the national pride so high, while the troubles through which she had lately passed during the days of the Fronde had strengthened the conviction, long entertained in France, that her unity as a great nation could only be maintained if that unity was not merely represented by, but definitely identified with, that of an absolute monarch.

No one, says St. Simon, the great biographer of the time, spoke any longer of the interest or the honour or the 'glory' of the State but of the King. Of these sentiments, the young King was the very incarnation. If he never actually used the expression, 'I am the State', it at least represents his views. Looking on himself as the divinely appointed leader and master of his country, he was fully convinced that she was designed to continue in her career of conquest; to acquire the Rhine frontier which Frenchmen have ever, though wrongly, considered to be their natural boundary, and finally to make herself the arbiter of the destinies of Western Europe at least.

Nevertheless even Louis himself recognized that before such a course was possible, it was necessary to set his own kingdom in order. In the very midst of her war with Spain, France had been torn by the 'Wars of the Fronde', that strange travesty of the Great Rebellion in England which, begun by the Judicial Court of France called the 'Parlement' of Paris, had been made use of by the Princes of the Blood, the nobles, and all those who had resented the centralizing policy of Richelieu and who disliked more especially to see the government in the hands of Cardinal Mazarin, a man of no birth and a foreigner.

The rebellion had indeed been quelled, but it was imperative that the possibility of a renewal of the troubles should be removed, that the work of Richelieu should be completed, and that some order at least should be restored in the political and financial condition of the country.

In dealing with the political constitution of France, it is necessary to remember the history of her growth. Based  
INTERNAL CONDITIONS originally on the royal domain, a small district surrounding the cities of Paris, Orleans, and Bourges, the government had never entirely lost its character. The royal domain had indeed been vastly increased by the gradual absorption of the great fiefs, and by conquests from the foreigner. But the Kings of France had never been able effectually to consolidate their dominions, or to organize a strong united kingdom, as had been the good fortune of the Norman and Angevin Kings of England. They had therefore

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perforce been contented with assuming a general control, and with establishing certain central bodies, more especially that of the Royal Council, while they left many of the old institutions standing. Hence the government of France was a chaos of old survivals of the past, jostling each other and the central authority, without vitality enough to be of any use, yet able to obstruct the Crown at every turn. A representative assembly of the whole country had indeed once existed in the States-general, composed of deputies of the clergy, the nobles, and the third estate. Its attempts, however, to follow the steps of the English Parliament and to control the Crown had been resented, and it had never been called together since the year 1614.

In some fourteen of the Provinces<sup>1</sup> there still existed provincial estates, but with a few exceptions, these had lost all power; true, they still had the right of laying their grievances before the King but without any means of securing redress.

In the absence of any effective representative assembly, the provincial 'Parlements'<sup>2</sup> and especially the 'Parlement' of Paris attempted to check the royal despotism. Formed of judges and of lawyers, their assumption of political power was based, at least in the case of the 'Parlement' of Paris, on a claim to register or to refuse to register the royal edicts. Not only was this ground of pretension a narrow one, but being a body practically hereditary, it was in no way fitted to represent the nation; its members had finally discredited themselves by their action at the time of the Fronde, and it was now once more confined to its judicial functions. For the rest, the justice of the country was in the hands of numerous authorities, royal 'prevôts', something like our justices of assize; noblemen with their manorial jurisdiction; smaller judges in the villages; all struggling with one another over the limits of their several

<sup>1</sup> The most important were Brittany, the Boulonnais, Artois, Burgundy, Provence, and Languedoc.

<sup>2</sup> There were eight: Toulouse, Grenoble, Bordeaux, Dijon, Rouen, Aix, Pau, Rennes.

jurisdictions, and in the case of the two last, dispensing their so-called justice ignorantly and with much petty tyranny.

But the real cancer of the kingdom lay in its financial system, owing to which France, though the richest country in Europe, was constantly in budgetary difficulties. This system violated every acknowledged canon of taxation. It fell very unequally on the various classes, it checked trade, and it was collected in such a manner that the Government was defrauded at every turn, and received less than half the sums levied on the taxpayer.

The direct taxation consisted mainly of the 'taille' and the 'gabelle'. The 'taille' was a tax on landed property in some provinces and on land and personal property in others. The Frenchman of those days did not like paying taxes any more than he does now, and every one who had any sort of influence generally managed to escape them. Consequently the nobles, the clergy, the judicial and official classes ('noblesse de la robe'), and many others were exempt, so that the tax fell almost entirely on the poor. The 'gabelle' was the produce of the Government monopoly from the sale of salt. Each household was obliged to buy a certain amount according to its numbers, and to use it only for table purposes. Thus it was a kind of capitation tax, and, as the price was high, it fell especially severely on the less wealthy. Indirect taxation was not only exceedingly heavy, but customs dues were exacted at the boundaries of every province, so that it has been computed that a tun of wine paid its own value in dues before it reached Paris. It was, however, in the collection of these taxes that abuses were the most flagrant.

Owing to the numerous wars and internal struggles in which France had been engaged throughout her history, not only were the taxes very heavy, but they had in almost every case been farmed out to individuals or companies. These paid a sum down to the Exchequer, and recouped themselves by the taxes which they thereby acquired the right to levy, and they often obtained their lease on fraudulent terms through the influence of royal mistresses or other court favourites. In this way the royal exchequer had acquired

the necessary ready money, but at the cost of loss in revenue. Thus the farmers-general<sup>1</sup> of the taxes had become masters of the situation, and exercised their rights with severity and with cruelty. They often sub-let to others, and hence there was an army of sordid tax-gatherers, who lived on the unfortunate taxpayer. Moreover, State loans had been raised at usurious rates of interest which were assigned on some tax. France was, in fact, much in the condition of a bankrupt State of to-day which has forestalled its receipts and handed over its future revenues to a number of financiers.

To this we should add another feature peculiar to French government. Almost every office, high or low, judicial, financial, or administrative, had become practically hereditary, and was bought and sold something after the manner of our old system of purchase in the army. Thus the whole administration was clogged by an organized association of hereditary administrators whose very livelihood depended on preserving the effete institutions and who stoutly resisted all reform.

Nor were the social conditions any better. The Crown, afraid of giving the nobles any political power, had studiously deprived them of all office except that of occupying the nominal post of governors of the provinces, and of serving in the army and navy and in the higher positions in the Church, which were almost exclusively reserved to them, and also of filling offices round the court. They were thus condemned to a life of idleness, the most evil fate which can befall an aristocracy. They spent their time in pleasure and in gambling, thereby impoverishing themselves so much that they often had to sell their estates; they became absentees, and were known to their dependants only through their stewards, who levied their feudal and other dues; they crowded round the King in hopes of picking up some ceremonial post from royal favour.

The middle classes monopolized the judicial and adminis-

<sup>1</sup> At a recent exhibition of French Eighteenth-century Art held in London, out of 100 pieces of silver plate over one-third bore the name or arms of a Farmer-General!

trative departments, which, as said above, were practically hereditary in their families, and were tempted by the lucrative character of this work from devoting themselves to trade.

The lower classes were ground down by taxation and by the numerous dues they owed to their lords, while the artisans were checked in pursuing their industry by numerous guilds which were daily becoming more close.

Finally, the Church was divided between the nobles, who held all the higher and well-paid preferments, and the ' curés ', or parish priests, drawn from the lower classes and scantily endowed.

To reform these numerous and deep-seated abuses was indeed an Herculean task. But in his finance minister,

THE REFORMS  
OF COLBERT,  
1661-1683

Colbert, Louis XIV had at least a man who did not shrink from the attempt. The views of this most remarkable man were, in many ways, strangely modern. Some of them were very sound, others contained the seeds of failure within themselves. Like Henry IV and his great minister Sully, Colbert saw the potentialities of a country with so great a natural wealth and so large a population, needing only development by intensive work and the substitution of order for disorder, under the guidance and control of an enlightened and progressive administration. Like Sully, he strove to re-establish old and create new industries: France should make for herself a much larger proportion of what she had so far been buying abroad; every town must be an active centre of production, village industries must be encouraged for those not working in the fields, and every care must also be taken to improve the quality of production. For the fostering of new industries foreign experts must be brought in and established under State direction—glass-blowers from Venice, cloth-weavers from Holland, lace-workers from Flanders, miners from Sweden, and so on. Above all, in a well-regulated State there could be no idle folk; the nobles must be forced to work instead of being discouraged and even prevented by custom, and sometimes also by law, from doing so. There were too many priests, monks and nuns, who, besides being drones instead of producers, could bring up no families of

sturdy workers to represent them. There were far too many lawyers sucking wealth away with their fees, and the numbers of Government officials and of those who lived by farming and collecting the revenue must be reduced.

In so far as home trade was concerned, Colbert saw the evil of the prevailing customs duties as between province and province, and the extreme desirability of encouraging Free Trade within the country. He also set out to reduce the direct taxes, to raise them by more equitable methods, and to put an end to the frauds which the present system caused. He urged upon the King the necessity of improving the roads and canals, of establishing a uniform scale of weights and measures, and thus in every way increasing industry and trade. Finally, he hoped to substitute for the existing administration, with its antiquated survivals, its inefficiency and its peculations, a uniform and centralized system under the Crown itself. The King should preside over the Councils of Finance and Commerce, supervise the administration of justice, inform himself by personal inspection of the needs of his kingdom, carefully balance his expenses and his receipts, and thus become the wealthy, powerful King of an opulent people, and eventually the master of Europe.

Louis was not unwilling to listen to his advice, and opened his reign with vigorous measures. Fouquet, the head intendant of finance, a man who, by his fraudulent methods, had amassed a fortune greater than that of the Crown itself, was seized just after he had sumptuously entertained his master at his more than royal château at Vaux le Vicomte, near Melun ; tried with scant justice by a special tribunal, and condemned by Louis himself to perpetual imprisonment, although the court had only judged him worthy of exile. The farmers of the taxes were next attacked ; some of them were forced to surrender their leases to the Crown ; and those who had lent money to Government had to content themselves with a lower rate of interest or were paid off at a low price. The alienations of the royal domain were to some extent revoked. The customs at the frontiers of the sixteen Provinces in the centre were done away with, and internal free trade established throughout the kingdom. Industries were fostered

and measures taken to teach new and better methods of manufacture. Many roads were improved and canals made.

The colonies of France, more especially that of Canada, were developed; emigration was stimulated, and the soldiers who served in the colonies were forced to marry. The colonial and Indian trade was placed in the hands of chartered companies, in which the King himself had large financial interests, and colonial affairs put under the supervision of a Council of Commerce, on which the manufacturing towns of France were represented. Much was done to foster the merchant marine and improve the ports, and the ships of the Navy were increased from 20 to 200. Nor were the interests of science, of literature, or of art neglected. Academies of science, painting, sculpture and music were founded, an historic series of commemorative medals was instituted, and the great writers Molière, Corneille and Racine were awarded pensions.

The same energy was also shown in dealing with the other departments of administration. An attempt was made to fix the price of the purchase of offices and the age at which office might be taken. The independence of the Provincial Estates was attacked. But far the most important and far-reaching of the reforms is to be found in the development of the functions of the 'Intendant'. This official, whose rise to importance is to be traced to the days of Richelieu, was originally appointed to supervise the local financial system, but his powers had been extended, and the system was now finally established. Unlike the other officials, his office had never become hereditary or the subject of sale. He represented the King himself in each Province, and kept a general control of the local administration of police, of justice and of finance, and reported to the Comptroller-General, now Colbert himself.

Had Colbert's views been carried out to their logical conclusion an effective, though perhaps despotic, system of administration might have been established. But the King was not prepared for such a drastic reform. Accordingly the governors of the Provinces, the Provincial Estates, the local 'Parlements' and other courts, the numerous agents,

COLBERT'S  
REFORMS NOT  
CARRIED OUT  
COMPLETELY.  
THE RESULT



financial and other, still survived. Henceforth we note the presence of two conflicting authorities: the ancient, effete survivals of the past, and the new rule of the 'intendants', who gradually indeed absorbed most of the power, and yet were constantly opposed. Hence perpetual friction, which checked efficiency, and bred discontent. This too was the final outcome of the other attempts at reform. The old evils were too deep-seated, and too many interests and privileges were assailed, too many customs interfered with, too many prejudices shocked.

The very agents of reform were bribed. Colbert himself doubted whether the abuses could be removed in one lifetime; although he reminded Louis that he was still young. Moreover, the King himself was soon weary of the struggle. The discontent it caused was becoming serious; the initial loss to the exchequer would be great, the King himself imperatively needed money and neglected Colbert's earnest adjuration that he should carefully balance his expenses and his receipts. Accordingly the hope of radical and thorough reform was abandoned, and the King contented himself with acting much as he did in the case of the 'Intendants'. He left the old institutions with all their evils, intervening personally, violently, partially and often unjustly, when his attention was directed to any flagrant abuse. By this means his pride was flattered, since he could look upon the work, such as it was, as all his own. But his country suffered. The institutions, instead of becoming simple, centralized and efficient, fell more hopelessly into confusion. The Government became more arbitrary and more personal, and reform grew daily a more difficult task. The great savings which Colbert had effected were soon dissipated by war, and the danger of national bankruptcy daily increased. There is truth, therefore, in the saying that if Louis brought France to the height of her glory, he did it by methods which prepared her ruin.

For this Colbert himself was in part responsible. In the first-place, in so far as his financial administration was concerned, his aim was much more to get more money for the Treasury than to lighten the burden of taxation. He did

little to improve the lot of the great mass of the people, which was in many districts very miserable and became more so as the reign went on. The Royal demands for money were incessant, and Colbert's reminders to the King on the necessity for economy were not insistent enough. Indeed, he is convicted quite as often of declaring that 'for the King's glory no sacrifice was too great'. That France would have been unable, without Colbert, to meet the cost of the 'Age of Louis XIV' is probably true, but it is also true that Colbert was as wholeheartedly anxious as the King himself that it should be an age of magnificence and splendour at the top, at whatever cost to the struggling masses below. He was, therefore, pulled in two contrary directions, the fatal disequilibrium between expenditure and receipts, of the evil of which he himself was only too aware, continued and increased and real financial reform became impossible.

In the second place, while it is true that industry, trade and shipping did not absorb the whole of his energies, agriculture and the progress of rural France were in his eyes only secondary considerations, though, as we now see, the real wealth of France is in her peasants. It is perhaps unfair to blame him for his policy of forbidding the export of wheat except when the harvest was plentiful, for France was often exposed to famine, and no one at that time realized that the best remedy was to be found in free trade, even if that had been practicable. Moreover, it was the refusal, contrary to Colbert's wish, of each province to allow export to any other province even in good years which was the fatal step, for thereby the market became so limited that it hardly paid to grow corn at all, and the farmers positively dreaded a good year. However this may be, the fact remains that the condition of the peasantry steadily deteriorated under Louis XIV, and that the burden of taxation upon them was as heavy as ever.

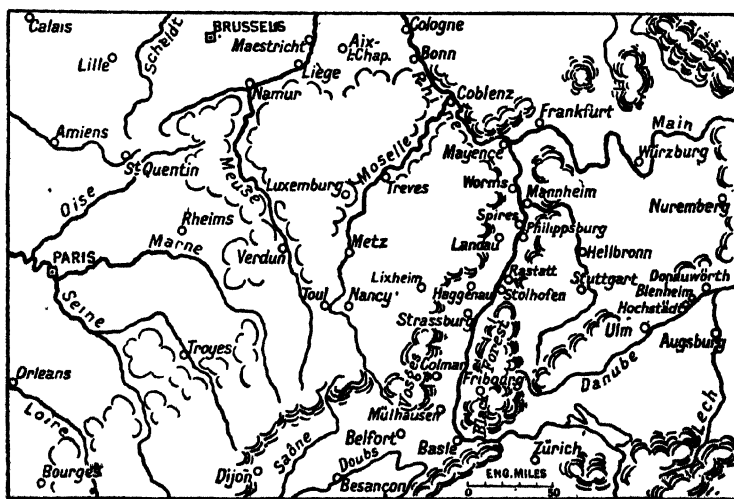
As regards trade and industry, his strong leaning towards high protection was indeed shared by most statesmen of the day, the English Navigation Laws indeed provide a good example. It is also reflected only too exactly in the economic policy which is now prevailing among the several nations of

the modern world. It did much to establish industry in France ; the silk and many other luxury trades, the famous Gobelins factory, the tapestries of Beauvais, all trace their pre-eminence to Colbert, and France owes it to the splendours of the Court of Louis XIV that she still leads the way as a manufacturer of *objets d'art* and articles of luxury, particularly in so far as the clothing and cosmetics of women are concerned. Colbert, in fact, belonged to the school of those whom to-day we should call Economic Nationalists. What he failed to realize were the dangers of this theory if carried to extremes. Thus in his attempt to foster home industries and to secure the excellence of their products, everything was over-centralized, over-organized and over-inspected. The minute rules which were drawn up, as for instance as to the width of the cloth to be woven, the elaborate regulations, above all the placing of many trades hitherto unshackled under the hampering rules and conditions of the Guilds, all tended to cramp individuality and stifle initiative, while experiment and invention, which are the very life-blood of commercial progress, were rendered impossible.

Above all, Colbert was under the strange delusion, shared indeed by some statesmen in much more recent times, that there is only a given quantity of trade available in the world, or, at any rate, that it can only increase slowly through the discovery of new lands, and that, in consequence, the trade of one country can only expand at the expense of other countries. For instance, Europe, he argued, has twenty thousand merchant ships, of which fifteen thousand are Dutch, three thousand English, and only five hundred French. This total number cannot be expanded ; if, therefore, England or France wish to augment their mercantile marine, they can only do so at the expense of the Dutch. International trade, therefore, is a struggle for wealth ('une guerre d'argent') ; the growth of wealth in one country must entail a loss of wealth to another, and by wealth Colbert meant gold or silver bullion which must be attracted to but never allowed to leave the country. As regards merchandise, exports by all means, but as few imports as possible. All this again sounds very modern and is to be contrasted with

the Free Trade theory that, if every one made twice as much as before and could exchange their products freely, the trade of the world would be doubled, and all would possess twice as much as before. Though this theory again is subject to limitations nowadays, the limiting factor, viz. the danger of over-production, can scarcely have existed in Colbert's time, since this is a phenomenon which is entirely due to the development of modern machinery. No one now would, therefore, approve of Colbert's conclusion that the great aim of a country should be to destroy the manufactures of another country. For how could this be done except by imposing prohibitive tariffs on the goods of other countries, a policy which must lead to retaliation on their part? Hence, a war of tariffs which would probably lead to war itself. Yet Colbert declared that this was the only policy to be adopted towards Holland, then the chief industrial rival of France. 'Holland', he said, 'must either be forced to accept our terms or be conquered.' Thus Colbert urged the King on, for the sake of the glory of France, in that course of war in which he was only too eager to engage, and which was finally to ruin all efforts at reform.

## CAMPAIGNS OF LOUIS XIV



H.V. Barker, Oxford 1902

## CHAPTER II

### THE WAR OF DEVOLUTION, DUTCH WAR, AND WAR OF THE LEAGUE OF AUGSBURG

**H**AD a cautious statesman been on the throne of France, he would have realized that the country really needed peace, and had little to fear from her neighbours, none of whom had either the power or the inclination to pursue an aggressive foreign policy. FRANCE NEEDS PEACE The royal energies would therefore have been concentrated on completing the financial and other reforms which had been only half accomplished.

Meanwhile attention might have been directed to colonial expansion, for here, had the interests or inclinations of her people lain in that direction, France had a THE FRENCH COLONIES great opportunity.<sup>1</sup> Spain had enough in Mexico and in South America to more than occupy her failing powers; the English colonies in North America were confined to Newfoundland and the narrow strip between the Alleghany Mountains and the sea, the Bermudas and Bahamas in the Atlantic, Jamaica, Barbados, and a few other small islands in the Caribbean Sea. In Canada to the north, therefore, and in the great basin of the Mississippi to the south France had ample opportunity for further advance. Brazil in South America and the settlements once made by Portugal in Africa, had languished since the mother country had been absorbed by Spain, and even when she did regain

<sup>1</sup> The French East India Company was founded in 1664. In the West Indies France held St. Domingo, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Martinique; in America, Canada, part of Nova Scotia and Louisiana; in Africa, Senegal.

her independence she was in no position to fight for her possessions. In India the English East India Company was as yet a purely trading company with no pretensions to empire. In a word, the colonial empires of Spain and of Portugal were falling to pieces; that of England had only just been started; while Holland, the only dangerous rival, could not possibly have prevented a French empire, or done much more than preserve what she at present possessed.<sup>1</sup>

It may, no doubt, be questioned whether the French had really the necessary qualities to become successful colonists, or whether emigrants would have been found in sufficient quantities; but that France needed peace can scarcely be disputed.

Unfortunately, though the ambitions of Louis were not confined to Europe, he wished to be master in Europe first. The extension of the French frontier, especially towards the Rhine, was part of the national tradition; most great Kings of France had distinguished themselves in war, and the young King desired to outrival them. The position of European affairs seemed most propitious, for there was no one State which was strong enough to resist. The ease with which he had stilled all opposition within the kingdom led Louis to overestimate his powers, and the partial success of Colbert's reforms gave him ready money. Tempted by his opportunities, he determined on a policy of unnecessary and unjustifiable aggression, and dreamt not only of fresh conquests but of subduing Europe itself.

A pretext alone was necessary, and that was soon found. Louis XIV, it will be remembered, had married the eldest daughter of Philip IV and the only child by his first marriage. On the death, therefore, of the Spanish King (1665), he claimed all the Spanish Netherlands in her name, in virtue of the Law of

THE WAR OF  
DEVOLUTION,  
1667-1668

<sup>1</sup> The only important Dutch settlements in the West were New Amsterdam in North America (ceded to England, 1667, and called New York), and Dutch Guiana in South America. In Africa they held the Cape, many factories on the Persian Gulf and along the Indian coast, the islands of Mauritius, Ceylon, Sumatra, Java, part of Borneo and the Celebes, and the large isthmus of Malacca.

Devolution, whereby he asserted that all the father's rights passed to the eldest daughter of the first marriage, to the exclusion of the children of any subsequent marriage. The claim was altogether baseless, for this law or local custom only obtained in some parts of the Netherlands, and moreover applied to private property exclusively and not to the sovereignty. In the war which commenced in May 1667 the success of Louis seemed certain. Spain was hampered by the attempt of Portugal to regain her independence, which had received French support. The Emperor Leopold was engaged in suppressing a revolt in Hungary. Many of the German princes were bribed, and Sweden was forced by threats to acquiesce, while Holland and England were still at war with each other. The advance, therefore, of the French was only feebly opposed. In August, Turenne occupied the three most important fortresses on the frontier—Charleroi, Tournay and Lille—and the whole of the Netherlands appeared to lie within his grasp.

Yet Louis was to be balked of his prey. Europe became seriously alarmed. Holland and England had now come to terms, and Charles II, bending before the popular feeling, allowed his representative at The Hague, Sir William Temple, to form the Triple Alliance with Holland and with Sweden. Louis, indeed, anxious to have something which he might use for the purpose of bargaining, sent Condé to occupy Franche Comté, which he did with his well-known dash. The coalition, however, was a formidable one. Spain had in February made peace with Portugal and recognized her independence and thus had her hands free, and the French King, with a prudence which did him credit, determined to treat.

The members of the Triple Alliance, anxious if possible to prevent any further continuance of the war, had prevailed upon the King of Spain to submit to some loss and to allow France either to keep her conquests in the Netherlands, or to retain Franche Comté. Louis took advantage of this. He induced the Emperor Leopold to promise in a secret treaty (January 1668) that, on the death of the childless Charles II of Spain, Franche Comté and the Spanish Nether-

THE TRIPLE  
ALLIANCE,  
JAN.-MAY 1668



lands should fall to France, the Habsburgs taking Spain, with the Indies, and the Spanish possessions in Italy. Having thus provided against the future, he offered peace to Spain on condition that he should retain his conquests in the Netherlands while he surrendered Franche Comté. Spain was forced to acquiesce. Accordingly in May 1668, the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle

THE PEACE  
OF AIX-LA-  
CHAPELLE,  
MAY 1668

Left France in possession of Charleroi, Lille, Tournay and eight other towns on the frontier of the Netherlands.

Thus Louis had secured a strong position which would form a basis for future advance. The peace would give him time to recruit his forces, and meanwhile the Coalition might by clever management be dissolved.

Charles II was first approached. He had followed the popular impulse in forming the Triple Alliance, but the commercial jealousy between England and Holland still survived, and there were more potent influences with the King himself. Although too clever to risk his throne by attempting the direct establishment of despotism, he disliked the restraints imposed upon him by his Parliament, and longed to be free from its financial control. Moreover, he desired, if not to re-establish Roman Catholicism, at least to secure complete toleration for the adherents of that faith. But these two aims could only be attained by the help of Louis, and accordingly in June 1670. Charles signed the Secret Treaty of Dover, by which he pledged himself in return for a promise of money to break with Holland, and assist Louis against the Republic.

SECRET TREATY  
OF DOVER,  
JUNE 1670

Two years later the Swedish Council of Regency, which ruled during the minority of Charles XI, was also bought. Meanwhile the neutrality of the Emperor and of many German princes had been secured. Brandenburg, for example, had concluded a treaty with France in December 1669, and Louis was free at last to wreak his vengeance on the defenceless republic of Holland.

—The French diplomacy of these past three years had been exceedingly clever, and from a military point of view, the attack on Holland had much to be said for it, for Holland

~~once gained, the Spanish Netherlands must fall to France.~~ Yet Europe was certain to be aroused by the renewed danger of French supremacy, and the only question was whether France could overwhelm the Republic before Europe moved. Louis might well anticipate success, for neither the character of the Government of the Republic, nor the internal situation at the moment offered much chance of instant and effective resistance.

The constitution of the seven United Provinces<sup>1</sup> was that of a confederation of very independent States which had handed over to a central representative body  
 CHARACTER OF DUTCH GOVERNMENT (the Estates-general), and to a central Council of State, the control of matters common to all, and the appointment of the Captain-general and the Admiral-general, while they retained not only all local administration in their hands, but also the election of their 'Stadholders', the voting of supplies and the questions of peace and war. By custom, though not by law, most of the Provinces had always, since the War of Independence in the sixteenth century, elected the head of the House of Orange as Stadholder, Captain-general and Admiral-general, and as this official was a member of the Council of State and nominated the chief magistrates, the unity of the confederation was thereby strengthened as well as by the fact that the Province of Holland, both in wealth and importance, nearly equalled that of the other provinces put together.

During the great struggle for independence against Spain, 1572-1609, the necessities of the time had rendered unity imperative, but no sooner was independence gained than the forces of disunion began to be strengthened by party and religious strife. The Stadholder, supported by the country districts, the nobles, the Calvinistic clergy and the peasantry, hoped to increase the central authority under his leadership, while the privileged burghers of the great towns fought for a continuance of provincial autonomy and a republican constitution, and were further opposed to extreme Calvinistic doctrines. The failure of an attempt to turn the Staad-

<sup>1</sup> They were Holland, Friesland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Guelderland, Overijssel Gröningen.

holderate into an hereditary monarchy by William II of Orange, and his death shortly after (November 1650), had indeed increased the strength of the burgher party, the office of Stadholder was abolished, and since that date the destinies of Holland had been guided by John de Witt. This great statesman represented all that was best in the Dutch character. To the simplicity, the straightforwardness, the stubbornness in the face of adversity, and the prudence in time of success, which were peculiarly the characteristic of his countrymen, he added a refinement, an eloquence, and a gift for diplomacy which were not so common. He had indeed fallen on troublous times, but he had guided his country safely through all dangers. He had dared resist the belligerent Commonwealth of England in its attempt to ruin the Dutch carrying trade, and though forced to bow before the superior artillery of the English and the tactical improvements introduced into naval warfare by Monk, had again renewed the struggle against Charles II of England (1665-1667). Once more, indeed, the English proved the stronger, winning a great victory in July 1666, and inflicting heavy losses on Dutch commerce, though Charles, by failing to maintain his fleet at sea during the peace negotiations, allowed De Ruyter to carry out his famous raid on the Medway (June 1667), a humiliation which forced England to consent at the Treaty of Breda to relax the Navigation Laws<sup>1</sup> so far as to allow Dutch ships to carry to England goods from Germany and from Flanders.

CHARACTER  
AND POSITION  
OF DE WITT,  
1650-1672

TREATY OF  
BREDÁ,  
JULY 1667

By the conclusion of the Triple Alliance, which shortly followed, the triumph of De Witt's policy seemed to be permanently secured. As events proved, it only prepared his final overthrow. With all his diplomacy, De Witt failed to plumb the depth of Charles II's duplicity, or to realize the weakness of the King of Sweden. He believed, and believed rightly, that Europe would not acquiesce in the

1. <sup>1</sup> The Navigation Act of the Commonwealth forbade foreign ships to bring any goods to England except those of their own country. It was aimed chiefly at the Dutch, who were then the chief carriers of Europe.

overthrow of his country without a struggle, but he did not realize the necessity of constant watchfulness, and in this matter was to some extent blinded by party considerations. In the hopes of conciliating the Orange party, he had in 1668, by the Project of Harmony, obtained for the son of William II, the future William III of England, the command of the army when he should reach the age of twenty-two; he was then eighteen.

When, therefore, Louis finally declared war, the unfortunate Republic found itself without allies and utterly unprepared.

THE DUTCH WAR, 1672-1679     In May 1672 the French King having seized Lorraine, on the pretext that the Duke had been intriguing with Holland, advanced down the Meuse to Maestricht and thence to Neuss on the Rhine, where the friendly Elector of Cologne had allowed supplies to be collected. His army, commanded by Turenne and Condé, marched down the Rhine without opposition till it reached the neighbourhood of Arnheim. Then, swinging to the left, it crossed the Old Rhine at Tolhuys, and turned the position of the young Prince of Orange, who was holding the line of the Yssel.

Amsterdam now seemed doomed. A rapid advance on Muyden might, it has been said, have placed the control of the sluices of that district in French hands, and prevented the Dutch from flooding the country. This may be so, for the Dutch did not decide to cut the dykes till 15 June, and this was not completely effected till the 20th, though it may be questioned whether in any case the French could have advanced quickly enough.

By the 20th of June, at all events, the country had been flooded, and Amsterdam and most of the Province of Holland was for a time safe from all attack. Elsewhere, however, the peace party were strong. Accordingly the States-general made overtures for peace to Louis, the Dutch at the end of June offering to surrender practically the whole of their eastern frontier from the Meuse to the Scheldt, which would have included the important fortress of Maestricht on the Meuse and the district round it. This would have given France a magnificent position for any further attack on the

United Provinces, and would have left the Spanish Netherlands at her mercy. Louis, however, puffed up by his success and urged by Louvois, his Minister of War, only raised his terms still higher. He himself acknowledged subsequently that he was driven on by ambition, which he pleaded was pardonable in a prince so young and so well treated by fortune as he had been.

The Dutch refused the new terms, overthrew the party of the burghers, and gave to young William of Orange the post of Stadholder, as well as that of Captain- and Admiral-general (3-8 July). The popular indignation, fanned no doubt by party spirit, was not yet satisfied. It demanded a victim, and that victim De Witt, who had for twenty years guided his country's fortunes with such wisdom. From a first attempt on his life on 21 June he had escaped, but at the end of August he and his brother were dragged from prison, where they were awaiting their trial, and brutally murdered in the streets of The Hague. It does not indeed appear that William of Orange himself was directly implicated in this foul deed, the result of which was to leave him without any rival in Holland. Nevertheless, he took care to know nothing of the intended outrage and did not intervene. In short, the future King of England here first displayed the callous and calculating temperament which ever alienates our sympathies.

Louis' ambition had overleapt itself. The Empire, already suspicious of French encroachments on Lorraine, was roused to a sense of the dangers it ran. A strong anti-French feeling was growing in Germany, which found expression in pamphlets, lampoons and caricatures, while most of the Princes whose aid or neutrality Louis thought he had secured, now refused to fulfil their promise, or even come to the help of the United Provinces.

In October, the Emperor Leopold and the Great Elector of Brandenburg made an offensive alliance with the Dutch Republic, and though the latter was soon compelled to ask for terms by Turenne's advance into Westphalia, and retired from the struggle for a time (June 1673), the coalition steadily

WILLIAM OF  
ORANGE MADE  
STADHOLDER,  
JULY

MURDER OF DE  
WITT, AUGUST

ALLIANCE  
AGAINST  
FRANCE,  
1672-1674

grew. In August 1673, Lorraine and Spain: in January 1674, Denmark: in March, the Elector Palatine and other German Princes were added to the League. In May the Diet declared war on France, and in July Brandenburg again took up arms. Meanwhile, in February 1674 the English Parliament had forced Charles II to abandon his French ally, and Sweden alone remained.

The struggle indeed continued with success for France, mainly thanks to the skill of Turenne, and her enemies' slowness and want of cohesion. Spain, as usual, was the one to suffer most. She saw Franche Comté once more in French hands, while the Spanish Netherlands became again the theatre of war.

The following year, however (1675), closed gloomily for Louis. In June Charles XI of Sweden was unexpectedly defeated by the Great Elector at Fehrbellin near Berlin. More serious was the loss of

BATTLE OF  
FEHRBELLIN

Turenne. After a most brilliant winter campaign in Alsace, he had driven the Imperial troops under Bournonville and the Great Elector across the Rhine (Jan. 1675). On Montecuculi, the best of the Emperor's generals, replacing Bournonville and again invading Alsace, Turenne outmanœuvred him completely, forced him to recross the Rhine, and was on the point of attacking him with every prospect of success, when he was struck down by a stray shot. The French hastily retired behind the Rhine where, for the rest of the war, they remained on the defensive. In the autumn ill health forced Condé to resign.

DEATH OF  
TURENNE,  
27 JULY, 1675

France had now lost her two great generals and was thoroughly exhausted. The struggle, however, still continued for three weary years (1676-1678), marked only by a victory of the Duke of Orleans, the brother of Louis, over William of Orange, a victory it is said which caused the jealous King extreme disgust.

Meanwhile Louis, convinced that nothing more was to be gained by war, betook himself to diplomacy, and by his cleverness succeeded in extricating himself from a perilous position with some success.

He turned first to England and prevented that country from active interference, for which Danby was anxious, by supporting the Whigs, some of whom were bribed, in their attacks on that minister; then, working on the jealousies which are always the chief weakness of a coalition, he succeeded in concluding separate treaties with his foes. By the Peace of Nimeguen the Dutch lost nothing.

PEACE OF  
NIMEGUEN,  
AUG. 1678-  
FEB. 1679

Spain, which had not been a principal in the war, was the chief sufferer. She had to surrender Franche Comté as well as several fortresses in the low countries which gave France a strong frontier from Dunkirk to the Meuse.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor exchanged Freiburg for Philipsburg, while the Duke of Lorraine, rejecting the terms offered to him, became a soldier of fortune in Austrian pay, the Duchy remaining in French hands.

Louis had not succeeded in punishing the insolent Dutch Republic, but so far as actual gains went, the war had not been barren.

The frontier towards the Spanish Netherlands had been materially strengthened, Lorraine was temporarily occupied, and the possession of Freiburg in Breisgau gave him the command of one of the most important passes through the Black Forest to the Upper Danube. Above all, he had acquired Franche Comté, a province much desired by France for two centuries: he had pushed the frontier to the Jura and secured the watershed of the Saone. Yet France had paid heavily for these gains. The frontier provinces had been wasted by war. The exchequer was empty, in spite of increased taxation and heavy loans. Turenne was dead, and Condé was now past work.

Unfortunately the ambitious King refused to consider this side of the picture. He thought only of his notable successes both in war and diplomacy. He despised his foes, and looked around for further opportunities of aggrandisement.

The Peace of Nimeguen had scarce been concluded before Louis began to move. According to the terms of that peace, as well as that of Westphalia, the districts and towns ceded

<sup>1</sup> The most important are Cambrai, Valenciennes, St. Omer, Ypres, Cassel, Dinan.

France had included their dependencies. To settle what these dependencies were, he proceeded to establish judicial courts, called Chambres de Réunion. Of these CHAMBRES DE RÉUNION there were four: the first at Tournay, for Flanders; the second at Besançon, for Franche Comté; another at Metz, for the Three Bishoprics; and the fourth at Breisach, for Alsace. The work of the first two was soon finished, and their decisions, which settled the question of the Flemish towns and adjudged all Franche Comté to France, were not unjust. Nor perhaps can much exception be taken to the verdicts of the chamber at Metz. It had to decide what were the possessions and who the feudal vassals of the three bishops, since all such were to recognize the sovereignty of the King of France. The question was a difficult one, for during the troublous times of late many lands had been wrongfully seized, and many had tried to escape their feudal dues. Here again, therefore, no gross injustice was perpetrated.

Far otherwise was it with the chamber at Breisach. The Peace of Westphalia,<sup>1</sup> although its terms were vague, had distinctly reserved the rights of the Empire over the 'immediate' nobles of Lower Alsace, that is, those who held directly of the Emperor, and over those Imperial towns that lay in the same district, as well as the independence of Strasbourg. Nevertheless, the chamber gave absolute and exclusive sovereignty over Upper as well as Lower Alsace to Louis, thereby making the immediate nobles vassals of the French King, and by implication handing over the Imperial towns in Lower Alsace to him. Louis forthwith proceeded to enforce the verdicts of the chamber by bribes, by intrigue, and by force. The victims of this shameless act of spoliation were defenceless without the help of the European Powers, none of whom would intervene. The Emperor Leopold could not secure the support of any of the leading German Princes, and was, moreover, once more troubled with his Hungarian rebels, who were aided by the Turks. Spain was powerless, Sweden dependent on France, Brandenburg had come to terms with Louis (Oct. 1679) accepting a subsidy and promis-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 3.



ing him her vote at the next Imperial election, while Charles II of England, though disturbed by these fresh encroachments, was driven by the violence of the Whigs in the matter of the Exclusion Bill<sup>1</sup> to become the pensioner of the French King, and thus escape from the necessity of summoning Parliament (March 1681).

Louis, therefore, met with little opposition, except at Strasbourg; and even there, by bribery and by a display of force, he at last attained his end. In September 1681 he was master of the most important town on the Upper Rhine, as well as Besançon, and on the same day Casale in Montferrat was occupied with the assent of the Duke of Mantua. These fortresses were now strengthened by the great French engineer Vauban, and France was henceforth girded with a line of first-rate fortresses on her eastern border; while Casale, in addition to Pinerolo (which had been gained in 1648), gave her armies an easy access to the plain of Lombardy.

Even then Louis was not content. Luxemburg, he declared, was necessary to complete the line of fortresses on the east; but since no chamber could grant him that, he attempted to seize it (November 1681). Warned, however, by signs of growing opposition in Germany, where attempts were actually being made to reorganize the Army of the Empire, he drew back, and once more betook himself to negotiations, which even the news that the Turks were at the gates of Vienna (June 1683) did not interrupt.

Ever since the days of Charles V and of Francis I there had been an alliance with the Turks, but France had never actually assisted them, and Louis certainly had no such design. His wish to secure the command of the Mediterranean and to make himself master of the African coast, as well as his pretensions to be the head of the Catholic cause in Europe, rendered such a policy quite impossible. Nevertheless, in Austria's danger lay the opportunity of France. Louis hoped that the siege might fail, but was not unwilling that it should continue. And if the worst came to the worst and the city fell, he could then lead a crusading army of

<sup>1</sup> A Bill to exclude James, the Roman Catholic brother of Charles II, from the succession.

French and Germans against the infidel, stand forth as the saviour of Christendom, and secure for himself the election of the Imperial crown on the death of the present Emperor. This, at least, was not to be. The Princes of Germany for once rallied to the side of the Emperor, and a large army under the Duke of Lorraine, reinforced by 25,000 Poles under John Sobieski, the Polish King, marched to the relief of the Austrian capital, routed the Turks (12 September, 1683), and snatched from Louis the title of Deliverer of Christendom.

On hearing of the relief of Vienna, Charles II of Spain declared war on France (October 1683), but only to find himself without allies, and once more to suffer loss. The French took Luxemburg in the following June, and Spain was forced to buy peace by surrendering that town, Bouvines, and other villages near Luxemburg and in Hainault, as well as the protectorate over Genoa. Finally the Emperor and the Imperial Diet, by the Truce of Ratisbon, guaranteed to France for twenty years the possession of all that had been assigned to her by the chambers of Metz, Breisach and Besançon.

Louis, to all appearances triumphant abroad, now turned his attention to ecclesiastical affairs at home. His policy is characteristic of the man. As in the State, so in matters ecclesiastical, he desired to establish uniformity based upon the personal authority of the Crown. These views had already

brought him into conflict with the Pope. A quarrel which arose in 1673 over the claims of the Crown to the revenues of all vacant benefices in France had led Louis to revive the ancient rights of the Gallican Church, and to induce his clergy not only to assert

the superiority of a General Council of the Church over a Pope, but to deny his pretensions to overrule the customs and rules of the Church of France, and his claim to depose a King, or in any way interfere in matters temporal. Louis did not intend to break with Rome. He only insisted that the Pope should not interfere with his temporal authority over the Church in France. This had long been the policy of the Kings of Spain,

VIENNA SAVED  
FROM THE

TURK, SEPT. 1683

TRUCE OF  
RATISBON,  
AUG. 1684

QUARREL WITH  
POPE INNOCENT  
XI.

THE FOUR  
ARTICLES OF  
S. GERMAIN,  
1682

the most orthodox of sovereigns, and of the ancient Republic of Venice, who said they would accept their religion but not their Church government from Rome. Nevertheless it was certain that, if Louis had his way, the Church would become a mere creature of the Crown, and in any case it was not to be expected that the Pope would tamely acquiesce. Innocent XI at once condemned the 'Resolutions', and refused to sanction the consecration of any bishop who accepted them. A long struggle ensued, not ended till 1693, during which as many as thirty sees were without bishops, and more than one hundred parishes without canonically instituted priests.

The desire of Louis XIV to be free from external interference in the government of the Church may find its apologists, but few would now approve of his policy towards the Huguenots. The Huguenots, or Protestants of France, had since the days of Henry IV enjoyed, by the Edict of Nantes, a toleration which was denied them in other Roman Catholic countries, and which exceeded that accorded to Nonconformists by Protestant England herself; and although Cardinal Richelieu had withdrawn their privilege of organizing self-governing communities in several parts of France, he had left them their liberty of worship. To a mind like that of Louis, the very existence of such a state of things was abhorrent. He was the enemy of privilege, and they were a privileged body. He had attempted to establish a uniform centralized government in matters political, and the existence of this body of Nonconformists seemed to him an anomaly. In spite of his quarrel with the Pope he was severely orthodox, and became as life grew on more devout. He loved to pose as the most Catholic King, and was daily assuming the position hitherto held by the King of Spain. His Catholic clergy, headed by Bossuet, the greatest ecclesiastical statesman of the day, then Bishop of Meaux, as well as Père la Chaise, his Jesuit confessor, never ceased to urge that the extirpation of heresy would well befit the most Christian King.

Ever since the year 1661 a policy of repression had been pursued. The clauses of the Edict of Nantes had been nar-

rowly interpreted, and many liberties thereby interfered with. In the year 1681 further measures followed. All Huguenots were debarred from public employment, their children were ordered to be converted, and energetic attempts made to force the parents to conform. When the unfortunate victims of this policy sought refuge in exile, emigration was forbidden, and conversion was enforced by a system of quartering soldiers on the obstinate, known as the 'dragonnades'. Finally the King, perhaps misled as to the success of these measures, decided to settle the business. In 1685 the Edict of Nantes was revoked, and the profession of Huguenot opinions became a legal crime, while, in the following year, the Duke of Savoy was forced to expel his Protestant subjects from the valleys of the Pays du Vaud, lest by their proximity they might infect France, now restored to orthodoxy.

EDICT OF  
NANTES  
REVOKED, 1685

It has been usual to lay this persecution at the door of that remarkable woman, Mme de Maintenon, who, once the governess of the royal children, had become the King's chief confidante, and on the death of the Queen had been secretly married to him in 1684. But, although it was largely due to her that Louis reformed his private life, and became more strict and more devout, we have the evidence of her own letters to prove that, if anxious for the conversion of the heretics, she did not approve of these violent measures of repression, perhaps because she remembered that she had once been a Huguenot herself.<sup>1</sup>

No, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes is so completely a part of Louis' policy that the chief responsibility must lie with him, though none the less it must also be shared by the whole body of the clergy and by a large proportion of the nation itself. Nor must we judge of Louis by the standard of our own day. France had hitherto been in advance of the rest of Europe in the matter of toleration; and if Louis, in reversing this policy, acted with unnecessary and even brutal severity, we must, while condemning him, remember how every Catholic sovereign of the day treated the Protestants

<sup>1</sup> She was the widow of the burlesque poet Scarron, and was born a Protestant.

in his own country, and how Protestant England treated the Catholics in Ireland.

Yet if his conduct does not deserve to be called a heinous crime it was at least a serious blunder. The Huguenots at that time were in most parts of France composed of the middle and industrial classes, who, by their labour and their enterprise, were enriching France ; and these, to the number of at least 300,000, left their country and planted their industries in other lands, notably in Holland, Brandenburg and England. Nor was this all. Many joined the armies of the enemies of France, and took their share in inflicting those losses which she was henceforth to suffer.

While Louis was thus depriving his country of some of the best of her sons, and spending enormous sums on his new palace at Versailles, Europe was preparing to resist him once more. Divided though she was, his late aggressions had touched too many interests and awakened too many apprehensions. In the year 1681 a premature attempt at coalition had been made, and finally in July 1686 the League of Augsburg was formed. It was joined by the Emperor, the Kings of Spain and Sweden, the Elector of Saxony and by the United Provinces.

In the next year the Duke of Bavaria and Victor Amadeus, the Duke of Savoy, subscribed to the League, while even Pope Innocent XI, still at variance with Louis, gave it his secret support.

The French King forthwith demanded that the Truce of Ratisbon (cf. p. 31) should be turned into a definite peace, and that his creature, William of Fürstenberg, should be recognized as Archbishop and Elector of Cologne, although he had not been properly elected. On the refusal of these demands, Louis seized the opportunity offered by the death of Charles Elector Palatine,<sup>1</sup> last male representative of the Simmern family, and invaded the country. He claimed it in the name of Charlotte Elizabeth, the sister of the late Elector, who had married his brother the Duke of Orleans.

<sup>1</sup> Charles was nephew of Prince Rupert and grandson of the unfortunate Frederick, the Winter King, who married the daughter of James I of England.

This invasion has often been held to be the capital blunder of the French King. Had he, it is said, attacked Holland instead, William of Orange would never have dared to cross to England at the invitation of the Whig Lords ; the Revolution of 1688 would not have occurred, at that moment at least, and James II, forced by necessity to ally himself with Louis, might have altered the fortunes of the coming war. It is even alleged that Louis, piqued at the refusal of James to lend him his support, or to oppose the landing of William by a joint movement of the French and English fleets, a policy which public opinion in England would not brook, made his move on the Palatinate of design, so that William might be free to sail. It is probably true that Louis and his advisers imagined that the struggle in England would be prolonged. As James would not, or could not, abet his schemes, it might well be that such a struggle would completely paralyse the action of England for a time at least. With England neutral, and William fully occupied, France might again defeat or break up the coalition, as she had done before. In any case, it is extremely doubtful whether an attack on Holland could have been made with sufficient rapidity to stop William's expedition. Louis' main aim was to compel Germany to make permanent the Truce of Ratisbon. The invasion of the Palatinate might well be expected to gain that end, especially as Louis offered to withdraw at once and even to surrender Freiburg in the Breisgau on that condition. The blunder was due rather to a want of knowledge of the true situation in England, but even Englishmen never dreamt that James would take to flight and abandon his crown without an effort. The truth of the matter is that Louis was blinded by his arrogance. He had so often defeated these coalitions by war or by diplomacy that he believed it could be done again, and he would not realize that under existing circumstances this was impossible without the aid of England.

The invasion of the Palatinate served only to arouse the hostility of many German Princes who had hesitated. Louis soon found that the country could not be held, and accordingly proceeded to order its devastation, to the grief of the

Duchess of Orleans herself, who did not desire that her claim should be enforced at such a cost to its unfortunate inhabitants.

Meanwhile William of Orange had sailed, on the very day that Philipsburg fell, the first city in the Palatinate to be attacked. The crown of England was soon his and James II a fugitive in France. From that moment the fortunes of Louis XIV depended on the restoration of James. Had the later Stuarts been true to the best interests of their country, French ambition would have been bridled before. Owing to the political circumstances of the time, England could incline the balance any way she chose, and now that William was King there was no doubt as to the scale into which her influence would be cast. The one motive of his life is to be found in his opposition to the French King, an opposition which was based on fundamental differences of temperament and opinion. As a man, as a Protestant, as a Dutch patriot, as a European statesman, the views of Louis were accursed things to him. Here William found the inspiring enthusiasm which warmed his otherwise cold and calculating heart, and made him capable of great things. He had been called to power to save his country from French invasion, and from that moment he was the moving spirit of every coalition against his arch enemy. Nor was he to be despised. Though never beloved, he was at least respected. If he was no great general, and won few victories, he knew how to neutralize the results of defeat, and above all, he prevented others from despairing of his cause because he never despaired himself.

It is, then, the entrance of England, led by such a man, into the struggle as one of the chief actors, and the new importance which, in consequence, the question of the command of the sea assumes, that gives the chief interest to the war of the League of Augsburg.

Louis was rightly advised when he decided to send James II to Ireland to support him there. If Ireland could be held, William could scarcely send an army abroad, while her harbours would form excellent bases for the French fleet. The

defeat, however, at the Boyne once more drove James into exile, and with the fall of Limerick in 1691 Catholic Ireland was forced to submit to the hateful rule of Protestant England. The question of the supremacy at sea lay longer in dispute. In the summer of 1690 the French fleet under Tourville actually defeated a rather weaker Anglo-Dutch fleet off Beachy Head (30 June), and for the moment England seemed open to invasion. Louis, however, had no troops available for this purpose, and for want of them Tourville's success proved barren. The greater naval resources of the Allies soon enabled them to regain a numerical superiority, and when at length in 1692 the French massed a large army in the Cotentin for the invasion of England, the fleet to be charged with securing its passage was hardly half as strong as that collected to oppose it. There was, however, much discontent in England, William had made himself unpopular by his preference for Dutchmen, and many, including Russell, the English admiral, were intriguing with James II. But though many might be anxious to restore James, they were not prepared to see this done by French arms, and Russell, declaring that he would throw the first man overboard who whispered treason, led his fleet to victory at La Hogue in May 1692. La Hogue was, in many respects, the most decisive battle of the war. England henceforth was safe, and William could once more intervene on the Continent at the head of a substantial English army.

BATTLE OF  
THE BOYNE,  
JULY 1690

BATTLE OF  
LA HOGUE,  
MAY 1692

Here the struggle extended from the Rhine to Piedmont. In Italy the French defeated the Duke of Savoy at Staffarda (August 1690), and in 1693 drove Prince Eugène from Piedmont. In the Netherlands the war was more one of sieges and elaborate manœuvring than of pitched battles, the complicated drill of the day and the numerous fortresses with which the country was studded making it easier for the weaker side to avoid being brought to battle. The French took Mons (April 1691), and Namur (June 1692), an important fortress which stands at the junction of the Sambre and the Meuse, and thus commands the great military road from France. In the same year William

FRENCH VIC-  
TORIES ON LAND



was defeated at Steinkirk (August), by Marshal Luxemburg, easily the ablest of the French commanders, and again at Neerwinden in the following June. But these were dearly bought victories from which the French could gain little, and in 1695, Luxemburg being dead, William, whom no defeat could cow, was able to recover Namur. Louis, however, succeeded in October 1696 in buying off Victor Amadeus by restoring Savoy, which had been occupied, and by ceding Casale and Pinerolo, and it looked as if France might end the war without loss.

But Louis could not hide his eyes to the desperate exhaustion of his people which Fénelon, then Archbishop of Cambrai, one of the best of clergy of his day, had pointed out as early as 1693. Although Louis was not likely to follow Fénelon's injunction to expiate his past misdeeds by the surrender of all his unjust conquests, he was anxious to recruit his forces in preparation for the great European crisis which must arise on the death of Charles II of Spain. He therefore offered to treat.

His terms proved far more moderate than had been expected, and accordingly negotiations were set on foot, which led in the autumn of 1697 to the Peace of Ryswick. By that Peace, Louis was forced to disgorge some of his gains.

PEACE OF  
RYSWICK,  
SEPT.-OCT. 1697

1. Louis evacuated Breisach, Freiburg, and other places held by him on the right bank of the Rhine, but retained Strasburg, and Landau, together with the places in Alsace awarded to him by the *Chambres de Réunion* (p. 29) though giving up those so adjudged to him elsewhere.

2. The Dutch were allowed to garrison certain fortresses on the western border of the Spanish Netherlands, such as Ypres, Menin and Namur, as a 'barrier' against French aggression. Louis granted them a favourable commercial treaty, although they in return restored Pondicherry in India to the French East India Company.

3. Louis restored Lorraine to its Duke, but retained the Three Bishoprics, and surrendered the claims of the Duchess of Orleans on the Palatinate, in return for a sum of money.

4. Louis abandoned the candidature of Cardinal Fürstenberg to the archiepiscopal see of Cologne. He acknowledged William as King of England and promised to support no attempt against his throne.

5. The French evacuated Catalonia which they had overrun, capturing Barcelona in 1697.

A limit had at last been put to Louis' aggression ; his prestige had been lowered in Europe, the map of Europe was modified, on the whole to the detriment of France and to the advantage of Austria, who meanwhile had reconquered most of Hungary with Transylvania. Above all the balance had begun to swing in favour of the Maritime Powers, especially of England, and from this time the very real chance of seriously disputing the mastery of the seas with England, which Colbert had wished to take, had passed away. At home, France was at the last stage of exhaustion. The taxes had been heavily increased ; the debt had grown ; the Crown had been forced to betake itself to a renewed sale of offices to fill the empty treasury and there was no Colbert to grapple with the growing evil.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless the gains of Louis since the Peace of Nimeguen had been considerable. He had retired to the left bank of the Rhine, he had surrendered some of the fortresses on the frontier of the Spanish Netherlands, and allowed others to be garrisoned by the Dutch against him. By abandoning Pinerolo and Casale he had handed over to the Duke of Savoy the gate into Italy. Yet for all this the acquisition of all Alsace with Strasburg was a solid compensation. Doubtless the accession of William III to the throne of England was a serious blow ; the House of Commons did well to congratulate him on ' so advantageous a peace ', and on ' the honour of holding the balance of power in Europe which he had restored to his country '. But William was not in a position to assume the offensive even if he had wished so to do, and, if no new crisis had arisen, Louis might henceforth have sheathed his sword, and have turned to heal the distress of his people, which these long wars had caused.

The fates, however, willed it otherwise.

<sup>1</sup> Colbert died in 1683.

### CHAPTER III

## THE WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION—CLOSE OF THE REIGN OF LOUIS XIV

FOR many years the Powers of Europe had looked forward with apprehension to the day when the childless Charles II of Spain should die. His dominions, in spite of his late losses, were enormous. They included the whole of the Iberian Peninsula, with the exception of Portugal, and the Balearic Isles, the Spanish Netherlands, the Milanese, Naples and Sicily, Sardinia, and certain ports on the coast of Tuscany, as well as parts of North Africa and the Canary Islands, enormous colonies in Central and South America, and many islands in the Gulf of Mexico, in the Caribbean Sea, and in the Pacific.<sup>1</sup>

The question of the succession was as momentous as it was inevitable.<sup>2</sup> It involved the most serious issues, touching not only the commercial interests of England and Holland, but the prosperity of all the Powers and the very existence of some. Under these circumstances, it was absurd to expect that the question should be decided on mere legal grounds, as would be the case with regard to the succession to a private estate, and it is not fair to charge statesmen with cloaking their ambitions under the hypocritical cry of the necessity of maintaining the balance of power, or to

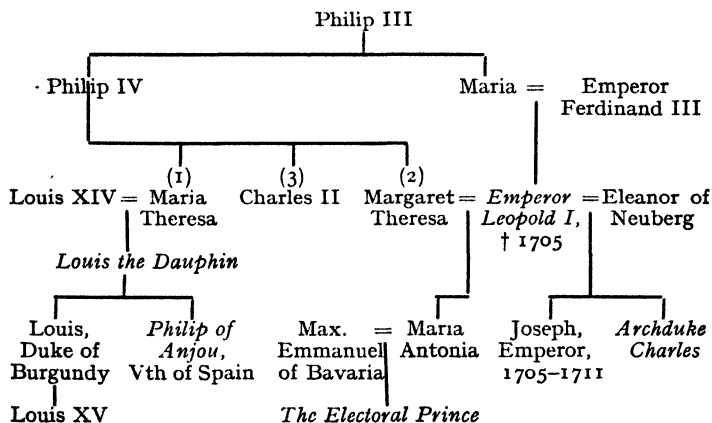
<sup>1</sup> Spain claimed the whole of Central and South America except Brazil, which belonged to Portugal, and Guiana which belonged to Holland. Mexico, Florida, and Peru were then the most important of the West Indian possessions. Cuba and Hayti were the largest islands. In the Pacific she held the Philippines.

<sup>2</sup> See Note next page.

liken them to harpies fighting over the body of their dying victim.

The problem had long engaged the attention of the diplomats. As early as 1668, Louis had signed a Partition Treaty with the Emperor by which the Emperor was, on the death of Charles II, to have Spain, the Milanese, and the Indies, while Franche Comté, the Netherlands, Naples and Sicily were to fall to France. Franche Comté Louis had now gained, but Holland and England would never, he was sure, allow him to hold the rest. A new arrangement must be made, and it is probable that the predominant motive which had induced Louis to accept such moderate

### 2 THE SPANISH SUCCESSION



1. The Electoral Prince claimed as great-grandson of Philip IV.  
 2. The Emperor Leopold I claimed: (1) as the grandson of Philip III; (2) that he had married the second daughter of Philip IV, and that his daughter, Maria Antonia, had surrendered her right to him. He, however, passed on his claim to his second son, the Archduke Charles.

3. The Dauphin claimed through his mother, Maria Theresa, the eldest daughter of Philip IV. Louis XIV, on marrying her, had renounced all claims she might have on Spain, but held that the renunciation was void because: (a) her dowry had never been paid; (b) the renunciation had never been confirmed, either by the Cortes, or by the Parlement of Paris.

terms at Ryswick is to be found in the hope that he might, by clever diplomacy, gain more than was possible by a continuance of the war. At all events, no sooner was the peace concluded than Louis opened negotiations with England and with Holland.

Of the many claims to the Spanish throne, that of the Electoral Prince of Bavaria was the most favoured, because his succession, accompanied by certain concessions to the other claimants, would not endanger the balance of power. By the first Partition Treaty, therefore, it was decided that he should have Spain, the Netherlands and the Indies, while the Italian possessions were to be divided between the Archduke Charles and the

FIRST PARTITION  
TREATY,  
OCT. 1698

Dauphin. On hearing of this treaty Charles II was greatly enraged, and made a will in favour of the Electoral Prince, but the death of the latter in January 1699, reopened the whole question.

Louis XIV, who throughout the negotiations showed a very remarkable knowledge of the European situation, abandoned all hope of gaining Spain itself for the Dauphin, and devoted his energies to securing as much of the other territories as possible for France.

By the second Partition Treaty, signed once more by England, Holland and France, the Archduke Charles was to succeed to Spain, the Spanish Netherlands and the Indies; while to the Dauphin were promised Guipuscoa in Navarre, Naples and Sicily, the Tuscan ports and the Milanese, though this last was to be exchanged for Lorraine.

SECOND PARTITION  
TREATY,  
MAY 1700

The Emperor, however, complained that this Partition Treaty would, by giving the command of the Mediterranean to France, leave his son, as King of Spain, entirely at her mercy, and refused to accept it.

Meanwhile in Spain the news that her ancient empire was to be divided caused the greatest indignation. The Queen, Maria Anna, who was the Emperor's sister-in-law, forthwith urged him to support the national cry, and to send the Archduke at once to Madrid. But Leopold was not prepared thus to lay down

WILL AND  
DEATH OF  
CHARLES II,  
OCT.-NOV. 1700

the challenge to Europe, and declined. This allowed the French party at the Spanish Court, headed by Cardinal Porto Carrero to carry the day, and eventually Charles II, induced to believe that France was the most likely country to fight for the integrity of the Spanish Empire, left the whole of his dominions by will to the Duke of Anjou, the second son of the Dauphin, with remainder to his younger brother, the Duke of Berri, and, in his default, to the Archduke Charles, should the Duke of Anjou ever succeed to the French throne. All alienation of Spanish possessions was forbidden, and no foreigners were to be admitted into the government. Thirty days later Charles II died.

- The terms accepted by Louis XIV in the Partition Treaty were so moderate, and the prospect offered by the will so magnificent, that Louis has been accused of deluding Europe with negotiations, while he was intriguing through Harcourt, his Minister at Madrid, to extort that will at Charles' death-bed. Although it is certain that Louis had by his diplomacy completely outwitted the Emperor, and had succeeded in making the French cause popular in Spain—no mean performance, if we remember how Louis had treated that country—this accusation is probably unjust. Indeed it may be questioned whether France would not have gained more by the treaty than she did under the will. With the territories allotted by the treaty to the Dauphin, territories which would some day be united to the Crown, the strength of France would have been much increased. The possession of Guipuscoa would serve as a centre for a future attack on Navarre.
- The exchange of the Milanese for Lorraine would some day lead to the incorporation of the Duchy of Lorraine with France, and this had always been one of the chief aims of Louis. Sicily, Naples and the Tuscan ports would be invaluable as a base for a great navy, which might dominate the Mediterranean; and France, once master there, would not only be able to establish her power on the northern coast of Africa, but would control the important commerce of that sea. One objection might, no doubt, be raised. With the Milanese in the hands of the Duke of Lorraine, and Piedmont and Savoy in those of the Duke of Savoy, neither

of them very friendly to France, an alliance might be formed against her between these two dukes, the Archduke Charles, if King of Spain, and his father, the Emperor Leopold, an alliance which would encircle France with a line of hostile Powers from Austria to Spain itself. But the Duke of Savoy might be induced to exchange his territories for Naples and Sicily; the Milanese might never be given up to the Duke of Lorraine. In any case, it was much to the advantage of France that the Milanese should no longer be in Spanish hands; while as long as France controlled the Mediterranean a union of the forces of Austria and Spain would be always difficult.

On the other hand, if the will were accepted, and the Duke of Anjou secured the whole of the Spanish Empire, Louis must abandon the hopes he had so long cherished of annexing the Spanish Netherlands and of directly extending his power in Italy. Nor could it be predicted with any certainty that the new King of Spain would be able or even willing to remain faithful to the French alliance. Against such a policy the pride of the Spaniards might well revolt.

That Louis was not blind to these considerations is proved by his hesitation on hearing the purport of the will, and by

LOUIS XIV	the anxious counsel which he took with his
ACCEPTS THE	chief advisers. Finally, however, he listened
WILL OF	
CHARLES II	to the opinion of those who urged the acceptance

of the will, and wrote a dispatch to William III explaining the reasons for thus repudiating the Partition Treaty. His arguments had great force. War he held, was inevitable in either case. If he adhered to the treaty, Austria and Spain at least would fight, and might well gain other allies. How could he be sure that Holland and England would support him? In England at least the second Partition Treaty had been intensely disliked because it gave the command of the Mediterranean and its commerce to France, and William was daily becoming more unpopular on those and other grounds. The English had cried for a reduction of the Army, and loudly declared that they were being sacrificed to the personal and the Dutch interests of their King, and William

himself acknowledged that the English preferred the will to the treaty. On the other hand, if Louis had to fight to place his grandson on the Spanish throne, he would at least be supported by the national enthusiasm of the Spanish fighting against the dismemberment of their empire. Moreover, as he reminded William III, the acceptance of the will would cause less apprehension to Europe. France herself would gain nothing, and would be prevented from any encroachment on the Spanish Netherlands.

So forcible did these arguments appear, that England and Holland declared their willingness to acknowledge Philip of Anjou as King of Spain, if his claims to the French throne were renounced and if he would consent to cede the Spanish possessions in Italy to the Archduke Charles, allow the barrier fortresses to be still garrisoned by the Dutch, and grant the same commercial privileges to the Dutch and the English in the Indies as should be given to France.

These were, it is interesting to note, practically the terms to which France and Spain were forced to accede at the end of the war. Had, therefore, Louis accepted them now, Europe might have been saved from thirteen years of carnage, and France would have had time to restore her finances and alleviate the misery of her people. Spain, though she would have deeply resented the dismemberment of her empire, could not have fought alone. The Emperor would probably have had, though grudgingly, to comply. All, therefore, depended on the decision of France. But the ambition of Louis had now been stirred again. His answer to these proposals was to reserve the rights of Philip of Anjou to the French throne, to seize the barrier fortresses, to throw an army into Italy, and to show that he intended to secure for France exclusive commercial privileges, not only in the Mediterranean but in the Indies.

Holland and England, threatened not only by the danger of a great Bourbon family compact, but in their trade, which was the mainspring of their life, were determined to resist, and prevailed on the Emperor to sign a secret treaty, which subsequently was expanded into the Grand Alliance,



The Allies declared as their aims the procuring of a reasonable satisfaction for the Emperor, and for the Dutch and

THE GRAND  
ALLIANCE,  
SEPT. 1701

English a guarantee for the safety of their respective countries and their commerce. To this end the Spanish Netherlands and the

Spanish possessions in Italy must be conquered, and measures taken to prevent the Crowns of Spain and France from ever being united. The commercial privileges of Holland and of England in the Spanish dominions must be confirmed, France must not be allowed to acquire any of the Spanish West Indies or any trading rights there, and any conquests made there by the Allies should be theirs. It is noticeable that in these terms there is no mention of the claim of the Emperor

PRIMARY  
OBJECT OF  
THE ALLIES

or Archduke to the Spanish throne: indeed, Philip of Anjou is by implication acknowledged.

The war, therefore, was originally engaged in pursuit of the balance of power and of the commercial interests of England and Holland. Louis, if he had been moderate in his demands, might have secured Spain for his grandson. This opportunity he had thrown away, and now, as if to show that he despised his adversaries, he made one more grave blunder. On the death of the exiled James II, he

LOUIS ACKNOWLEDGES THE  
PRETENDER,  
SEPT. 1701

recognized his son as James III, King of England. By so doing he broke his promise made at Ryswick, and roused English feeling

to fever heat. William III became once more the nation's representative, and, although he was not permitted to see

DEATH OF  
WILLIAM III,  
MAR. 1702

the end of the struggle, he died with the full assurance that the war with his lifelong enemy would be pursued with energy.

At the commencement of the war the combatants were not ill-matched. On the side of the Allies stood England, Holland and Austria; the Elector Palatine; Frederick, the Elector of Brandenburg, secured by the title of King in Prussia; and the Elector of Hanover; while shortly after the Imperial Diet was induced to declare war. Of these Powers, the energy of England depended mainly on whether the Tories or the Whigs would secure a majority; Holland was 'a many-headed, headless' confederacy, whose attention

was concentrated on the Netherlands, and who would not support the war elsewhere ; Austria was much distracted by the troubles in Hungary, and weakened at home by divided counsels and an ill-organized executive ; and the rest of Germany was chiefly valuable as a recruiting ground. On the other hand, Louis obtained the alliance of Maximilian, Elector of Bavaria ; of his brother, the Archbishop Elector of Cologne ; and of Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy. These allies were of the greatest value. The Duke of Savoy could open the Alpine passes from France to Piedmont ; Cologne gave him a strong position on the Lower Rhine, close to Holland itself ; and so seriously impeded communications between Holland and Vienna, all the more important because Bavaria afforded an indispensable basis for an attack on Vienna. The Spanish Netherlands, which had been occupied before the war broke out, formed, with their numerous fortresses, a barrier which could only be forced with difficulty, as well as a constant menace to Holland. In Spain, the French cause was certainly the most popular, while at home the concentration of all power in the royal hands should have made for military effectiveness and dispatch.

Favoured by these advantages, as in the previous wars, France was at first, on the whole, successful. In Italy, where the Emperor claimed the possessions of Charles II as lapsed fiefs, the war had broken out before the formation of the Grand Alliance. Here Prince Eugène, after beating back the French to the line of the Adda and taking prisoner Villeroy himself, was forced for want of due support to drop back behind the Adige (August 1702). Meanwhile Marlborough, who had been appointed Captain-general of Holland and Commander-in-chief of the allied armies in the north, by seizing a line of fortresses from Venlo on the Meuse to Bonn on the Rhine (1702-May 1703), secured his communication with Vienna. Nevertheless, owing to the unwillingness of the Dutch to co-operate in an offensive attack, he was unable to make any impression on the French position in the Netherlands, secured as it was by elaborate fortified lines.

Thus in the year 1703, Louis was able to develop his main attack on Vienna. In February, Villars crossed the Rhine at Strasburg, masked the position of Louis of Baden at Stolfhofen, forced the passes of the Black Forest, and joined the Elector of Bavaria on the Upper Danube. In Italy, Vendôme pushed Prince Eugène up the Adige, and over the Brenner Pass to Innsbruck. A bold advance on Vienna might have ended the war, but such a plan, though urged by Villars, was rejected by the Elector as too hazardous until Eugène had been dislodged from Innsbruck. This the Elector attempted, and the Prince was in danger of being caught between his troops and those of Vendôme, who were pressing north. At this moment the Duke of Savoy, with the selfish foresight so characteristic of his house, determined to join the Allies, being encouraged to do so by the presence in the Mediterranean of a strong English fleet. His defection forced Vendôme to retire to the Milanese, and the Elector, threatened by Eugène and the Tyrolese, who rose in defence of the House of Habsburg, dropped back on Bavaria.

Villars, however, had meanwhile defeated Louis of Baden at Höchststadt, near Blenheim, and had driven him back to Stolfhofen, when the approach of winter put an end to the campaign. Before the next campaign (1704) Villars, who had quarrelled violently with the Elector, was superseded by Marsin, a very inferior soldier. However, the French advanced again, while Rakoczy, the Hungarian rebel, threatened Vienna from the east. At this moment the whole fortune of the war was changed by the military insight and decision of the English general, Marlborough.

Realizing the desperate situation of Austria, he determined to leave his position on the lower Rhine, and to hurry to the assistance of Prince Eugène and of Louis of Baden. To do this, it was necessary to deceive not only the French, then under Villeroy in the Netherlands, but his Dutch allies themselves, who would certainly have forbidden a movement which might leave them exposed alone to a French attack,

Accordingly Marlborough, publicly announcing his intention of turning the French position and of threatening France by the way of the Moselle, instructed the Dutch to protect his right at Maestricht.

On reaching Coblenz (June 1704), he suddenly changed his course, and advanced by forced marches to Mainz. Thence, leaving the Rhine, he joined Louis of Baden at Ulm, on the Danube, seized Donauworth, after storming the Bavarian entrenched camp on the Schellenberg (2 July), and drove the French under Marsin and the Elector of Bavaria back on Augsburg. He had thus interposed himself between Vienna and its enemies, yet his position was still uncertain. Villeroy, meanwhile, had pressed south and joined Tallard at Stollhofen. This enabled Tallard to unite his forces with those of Marsin and the Elector at Augsburg, leaving Villeroy to oppose Eugène.

The Franco-Bavarian forces, if united, would have far outnumbered those of the Allies. Yet Marlborough determined to strike at once before they could unite, and ordered Eugène to neglect Villeroy and to move to Donauworth to join him. His enemy played into his hands. Expecting to catch Eugène isolated, and without waiting for Villeroy, they moved down the Danube to Blenheim, where, on 13 August, Marlborough and Eugène engaged them. In the battle which ensued, Marlborough, with his keen eye for position, directed his main attack on the centre where the enemy did not expect him. Piercing it, he hemmed Tallard in between himself and the Danube and forced him to surrender with most of his infantry. Marsin and the Elector fled back through the Black Forest to France, while Villeroy also retired hastily across the Rhine. This great defeat, the first really important reverse which the armies of Louis XIV had experienced, was a turning-point in the war. Not only was Vienna saved, but Bavaria passed into Austrian occupation, and the French, thrown back upon the defensive, were henceforward hard pressed to hold their own.

Meanwhile the character of the war had changed. In the original terms of the Grand Alliance no mention had been

BATTLE OF  
BLENHEIM,  
13 AUG., 1704

made of the Emperor's claim to the throne of Spain, and Philip of Anjou had for three years been left virtually undisturbed. But in May 1703, the King of Portugal was induced, by the favourable tariff offered by the English on all port wine imported into England, to join the Allies, on condition that the Spanish throne should go to the Archduke Charles, a condition which suited England because she believed that her commercial interests would be safer under a Habsburg than a Bourbon. The Emperor consented, though unwillingly, to surrender his claim to his younger son, and in 1704 the Archduke went to Lisbon, accompanied by a Dutch and English force. The Portuguese, however, proved unsatisfactory allies, and though, in August 1704, Admiral Rooke seized Gibraltar, and in a hard-fought battle off Malaga defeated the efforts of the French fleet to recover it, the Archduke's cause made no progress until in 1705 he proceeded to Catalonia, the which province was devoted to the Habsburgs. Here he gained a notable success by the capture of Barcelona (9 Oct.) and secured not only Catalonia but most of Valencia as well. Beyond this, however, he could make no real progress. His reliance on heretic and Portuguese allies made him hated in Castile, and though the English and Portuguese under Galway penetrated as far as Madrid in 1706, the Castilians rallied to Philip and compelled them to retreat into Valencia. Renewing the attempt in 1707 Galway was completely crushed at Almanza (April) by the Duke of Berwick, a very considerable soldier, the natural son of James II of England by Anne Churchill, and therefore also the nephew of the Duke of Marlborough. Valencia was now lost, and for the next two years the Archduke was hard pressed even to retain Catalonia.

In Italy, however, the Grand Alliance fared better and after Eugène had, by his brilliant victory at Turin in September 1706, secured the north of Italy for the Allies, the Kingdom of Naples was easily reduced in the following year, and though an attack on Toulon failed, the presence of a strong English fleet in the Mediterranean effectually

ALTERATION IN  
THE OBJECTS  
OF THE ALLIES

METHUEN  
TREATY,  
MAY 1703.  
PORTUGAL  
JOINS THE  
ALLIES

prevented any attempt to recover these possessions, and  
 FRENCH LOSE the English took Sardinia and Minorca in  
 ITALY, 1706 August 1708.

It was, however, in the Netherlands that the decisive  
 campaigns were to be fought. Progress in that quarter was  
 difficult. The numerous fortresses prevented  
 CAMPAIGN IN THE NETHERLANDS rapid advance; the Dutch, chiefly intent on  
 defending their own country from invasion,  
 were dilatory and inconstant, while the attention of Austria  
 and the Empire was distracted by the death of the Emperor  
 Leopold I (1705), and the election of his son,  
 DEATH OF LEOPOLD, MAY 1705. JOSEPH I ELECTED EMPEROR Joseph I. Nevertheless, in the following year  
 Marlborough succeeded in pushing up the Meuse  
 nearly as far as Namur, and completely de-  
 feated Villeroy at Ramillies, which lies at the  
 source of the Gheet, a tributary of the Demer, and, having  
 thus completely turned the flank of the French, forced them  
 to evacuate Brussels, and to fall back on the  
 BATTLE OF RAMILLIES, 23 MAY, 1706 frontier fortresses to the west.

At this moment his operations were checked  
 by a threatened diversion from the north-east. Charles XII  
 of Sweden, who had defeated Peter the Great at Narva in  
 1700, had turned aside to drive Augustus of Saxony from his  
 Polish throne, and to set up his own candidate, Stanislas  
 Leszczinski. In his camp in Altranstadt he had just received  
 the submission of Augustus, and was now listening to the  
 solicitations of Louis XIV, who urged him to come to his aid.

But Marlborough, who was as skilled in diplomacy as he  
 was in war, visited the Swedish conqueror, conciliated him  
 by concessions extorted from the Emperor  
 MARLBOROUGH VISITS CHARLES XII AT ALTRANSTADT, SEPT. 1707 with regard to the Protestants in Silesia, and,  
 seeing a map of Russia on the table, convinced  
 himself that Charles was too intent on his  
 Russian schemes to intervene in the West.

In September 1707 the Swedish King left his camp on the  
 fatal campaign, which was to end at Pultawa  
 CHARLES XII DEFEATED AT PULTAWA, 8 JULY, 1709 in 1709, and Marlborough was free to continue  
 his campaign in the Netherlands.

There Vendôme, who had replaced the 'exploded balloon',

as St. Simon calls Villeroy, had actually taken the offensive (June 1708) and recaptured Ghent and Bruges, and laid siege to Oudenarde, on the Upper Scheldt. But the presence of the young Duke of Burgundy, the grandson of Louis XIV, who had been placed in chief command, led to divided counsels; and Marlborough's promptitude and vigour resulted in a brilliant victory at that place (11 July) which led to the final evacuation of the Netherlands by the French. In December 1708, Marlborough, after a long and difficult siege, took the important fortress of Lille, and Mons and Tournay alone remained to stay his advance into the heart of France.

BATTLE OF  
OUDENARDE,  
11 JULY, 1708

France was now in the last extremity. On all sides, except in Spain, she had been defeated. She had lost Italy and the Netherlands, her position on the Rhine was seriously threatened, and there seemed small chance of arresting the advance of the Allies on Paris. Her best armies were no more, and her resources were exhausted. No further taxes could be imposed, or loans raised, and though many offices were created to be sold, this was a policy which could not be long pursued. Nature herself seemed to conspire against her, for the winter of 1708-1709 was so severe that the fastest rivers froze, and even trees were split by the intensity of the cold. Her proud King bowed before the hand of Providence, and reopening negotiations which he had already attempted in 1706 after the defeat of Ramillies, offered the most humiliating conditions. Lille, Tournay, Ypres and other towns should be ceded to the Dutch, Strasburg should be restored to the Empire; Newfoundland should be ceded to England, and France should cease to demand either Italy or Spain for Philip. The Allies, however, raised their terms and finally insisted that Louis should himself use his forces to beat his grandson out of Spain.

EXHAUSTED  
CONDITION  
OF FRANCE

LOUIS' OFFER  
REFUSED

No King with any sense of self-respect could submit to such conditions. Louis, after vainly attempting to influence Marlborough by bribes, refused, and appealed to the patriotism of his people. He was not disappointed. Volunteers arose to

defend their country, rich and poor poured in their contributions, and a fresh army was collected. Yet even this supreme effort seemed doomed, for at Malplaquet Villars was defeated by Marlborough and Eugène, and the fortress of Mons fell. Once more at Gertruydenberg, in the winter of 1709-1710, Louis offered peace. He offered to surrender Alsace and furnish supplies for the Allied armies in Spain. The Allies, however, insisted on their previous terms, and the negotiations broke down.

The conclusion of operations in Italy had meanwhile made substantial forces of Germans available to reinforce the Allies in Spain, and in 1710 an Anglo-German army under the Austrian general Stahremberg again penetrated to Madrid, winning a brilliant victory en route at Saragossa (19 August). But, as in 1706, the Castilians rose against the intruders and compelled them to retreat. Vendôme, pursuing with unwonted energy, overtook the English contingent at Brihuega and compelled it to surrender (10 December), and Stahremberg, after an indecisive battle at Villa Viciosa, was glad to regain Catalonia, to which province the Allied hold on Spain was thenceforward reduced.

France was now to be saved by the jealousies of her enemies, and by the party factions of the English. In England the Whigs, who had been in power since 1705, fell (August 1710), and the Tories under Harley and St. John came in shortly after. The Duchess of Marlborough had long ago lost her old influence over Queen Anne, and in January 1712 Marlborough himself was relieved of his command.

With the Tories the war of late had become most unpopular. They were the 'Little Englanders' of the day, and had long been declaring that England had small interest in the Spanish question, while some of them were hoping to restore the Pretender, and were therefore inclined to favour France, where he had found a refuge. Secret negotiations with France had already been commenced, in which England promised to desert her Allies as soon as her trade interests were secured.



when the Emperor Joseph died and the Archduke Charles, the Habsburg claimant to Spain, succeeded to the hereditary dominions in Austria, and was elected Emperor.

DEATH OF  
JOSEPH I,  
APRIL 1711.  
ARCHDUKE  
CHARLES  
ELECTED,  
DEC. 1711

By this event, the situation was entirely altered, and the arguments for peace were strengthened. The war, the Tories asserted, and with justice, had not been originally fought to drive the French candidate from his Spanish throne, but to preserve the balance of power, and to safeguard the commercial interests of the Maritime Powers. The latter might be gained by treaty, while the former would be better attained by demanding a guarantee that the crowns of France and Spain should never be united, and by securing the Italian possessions for the Emperor, than by giving him the whole of the Spanish dominions, and thus reviving the formidable empire of the great Charles V, when Habsburg ruled in Germany and in Spain. After-events conclusively proved the truth of this contention, and the desire of the Tories to end the war must therefore be commended. Nevertheless, party faction led them to extremes, as we may read in Swift's powerful pamphlet *The Conduct of the Allies*. The war was denounced as one continued in the interest not of the Prince or people but in that of Marlborough, the Whigs and the moneyed class who grew fat on the loans that had been raised ; a war in which her allies were to have the whole profit, while England, the dupe and bubble of Europe, was to bear a double share of the burden.

Influenced by such sentiments as these, the Tories continued negotiations for peace without consulting their allies, and actually instructed the Duke of Ormond, who had succeeded to Marlborough's command, not to hazard any battle without further orders ; an order which though known to the enemy was not communicated to Prince Eugène.

On 17 July, 1712, England finally withdrew from the war. The Allies, justly indignant at this conduct, still fought on.

But Eugène, deprived of the help of English troops and of Marlborough's advice and leadership, was no match for the energy and dash of Villars. Declaring that no time should be lost in preparing

ENGLAND  
WITHDRAWS,  
JULY 1712

fascines, since the bodies of those first slain would serve to fill the ditch, the French general stormed the camp of Denain (24 July) and retook the fortresses of Douai, Le Quesnoy and Bouchain (September–October), which had been lost to France since Malplaquet.

The Dutch now came to terms, and in April 1713, the peace was signed at Utrecht by all but Austria. The obstinate determination of the Emperor to continue the struggle enabled Villars to continue his successes. Landau was retaken, Spiers and even Freiburg on the German side of the Rhine were occupied (August–November 1713), and Austria, bowing to the inevitable, signed the Treaty of Rastadt on 7 March, 1714, which was confirmed by the Diet six months later.

PEACE OF  
UTRECHT,  
APRIL 1713

The terms of the various treaties, which are included in the Peace of Utrecht, were as follows :

1. Philip was acknowledged King of Spain and the Indies, on condition that the crowns of France and Spain should never be united.
2. Naples, Sardinia, Milan and the Netherlands were given to the Emperor, and Sicily with the title of King to the Duke of Savoy.
3. The Elector of Brandenburg was to be acknowledged King of Prussia, and was given Spanish Guelderland.
4. England received Gibraltar and Minorca from Spain ; and from France Newfoundland (subject to certain fishing rights reserved by France), Acadia or Nova Scotia, St. Kitts and Hudson Bay. She also secured a preferential tariff for her imports into the port of Cadiz, the monopoly of the slave trade, and the right of sending one ship of merchandise a year to the Spanish colonies.
5. The Dutch were to have the right of garrisoning the following towns on the west side of the Netherlands as a barrier against France: Furnes, Ypres, Menin, Ghent, Tournay, Mons, Charleroi and Namur, and for this purpose were to receive financial support from the Austrian Netherlands. They were also to be allowed to close the Scheldt to all trade without their permission.
6. The Electors of Bavaria and Cologne were restored to their territories.
7. France was to acknowledge George I as King of England, and to promise not to restore the fortifications of Dunkirk.

It will be well to note the chief changes in the European situation which had been effected since the opening of the struggle. The Peace of Utrecht finally closed the long series

## 46 THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

of wars which had been caused by the ambition of Louis XIV. By the peace, the rule of the Habsburgs in Spain, which dated  
 POSITION OF EUROPE from the beginning of the sixteenth century, came to an end, and henceforth till our own day the crown has been worn by a French Bourbon prince. On this point Louis XIV had gained his end, and the will of Charles II was confirmed. The old monarchy of Spain, though it retained its possessions in the New World, had to acquiesce in the French occupation of Franche Comté, and to surrender its Italian dominions and the Netherlands to the Habsburg in Austria.

Whether these acquisitions by Austria were a fair equivalent for the loss of Alsace and for having had to relinquish Bavaria, which she had held since Blenheim, may well  
 AUSTRIA be questioned. For their inhabitants did not speak her language ; they lay at some distance from her true centre of gravity, and served only to unfit her for the leadership of the Empire, and to distract her from the pursuit of German interests, to which, however, none of the German Princes were disposed to pay any attention.

The Dutch Republic secured the trade of the Scheldt, and obtained a barrier against French aggression. But she made no fresh conquests from this moment, her resources had been very severely strained, and she ceased to be a first-rate power.

England was no doubt the chief gainer. She had finally thrown off her Stuart Kings, who had made her the paid  
 ENGLAND adherent of France. Gibraltar and Minorca, with its harbour of Port Mahon, formed a basis for her future naval supremacy in the Mediterranean ; Newfoundland, and her conquests on the mainland of North America, for a future attack on Canada. Although she had not won any very conspicuous successes at sea, yet she came out of the war the mistress of the sea and with valuable commercial privileges.

The Duke of Savoy had gained Sicily and was left in the possession of Piedmont, which gave him a position of great importance in any future struggle between Habsburg and Bourbon.

France herself, chiefly owing to the dissensions of her enemies, escaped from the war on much better terms than she had any reason to expect. Although repeated  
 FRANCE defeats had so reduced her military power that all chance of her dominating Europe was over, she lost nothing on the Continent which she had gained in the previous wars of Louis' reign except a few towns on the east frontier. She retained Artois and most of Flanders, Valenciennes and Cambrai, Alsace and Franche Comté, as well as Cerdagne and Roussillon on the Spanish frontier; and the importance of these acquisitions was great. Her position in America was still potentially magnificent. She held Canada and the island of Cape Breton in the north, Louisiana and many West Indian islands in the south. And if her military prestige had suffered in the last war, it had been partially restored by the last campaign of Villars. If, therefore, we look at external results, we must admit that the warlike policy of the King had met with brilliant success.

At home, however, the price had been a heavy one. Opinions will always differ on the question whether a strong centralized administration under a despotic King was the best form of government for France at that time. But no one can doubt that the centralization to be successful should at least have been complete, and established on a sound financial basis. The long series of wars had done much to check completeness, and, added to the reckless extravagance of the King in building his new palace at Versailles and other royal palaces,<sup>1</sup> had ruined the finances. The problem of the future was, whether the necessary reforms would be carried out, whether the abuses in the central government would be abolished, and the survivals which marred its efficiency would be removed; whether Richelieu's policy of enforced idleness for the nobility would be reversed, as Colbert had advised, and their harmful privileges abolished, and whether finally, the country could be saved from bankruptcy.

In any case the result of this absolute rule was in one way evil. By the weakening of local government the people lost that political education which the enjoyment of self-govern-

<sup>1</sup> Versailles alone cost £24,000,000. and could house 10,000 persons.

ment provides, and individuality and independence of thought were dwarfed.

To this last result the religious policy of Louis XIV contributed. Not satisfied with the expulsion of the Huguenots, the King in his later years insisted on uniformity within the Church, and took severe measures against the Jansenists. This party, so called from their founder, Jansen, Bishop of Ypres in the seventeenth century, may be called the Low Church party within the Church of Rome. Founding their views, as they claimed, on St. Augustine's, they adopted the doctrine of Justification by Grace rather than by Works, as taught by their great opponents the Jesuits. Grace, they held, was a pure gift of God—a man cannot be damned if he has it, if he has it not, works will not help him. 'The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom' and the things which have been hidden from the wise have been 'revealed to babes and sucklings'. Here, indeed, they are moving on parallel lines with Malebranche and the Cartesian philosophers, who, though basing themselves on quite other arguments, held erudition to be elegant trifling and declared their contempt of authority. Salvation was not obtainable through the mediation of the Holy Virgin or the Saints, and they attached but little importance to the Sacraments of Baptism and Ordination. The individual must be in direct communication with Jesus Christ; hence they had a mediocre respect for the hierarchy and doctrines of a State Church. Their attitude naturally led to direct conflict with the Bishops and the King, over the latter part of whose life and policy religion, under the influence of Madame de Maintenon, came to exercise an ever-increasing control. The conflict of view is obvious; while insistence on the efficacy of works may tend to impair the necessity of Christ's Redemption, over-much dependence on the opposite doctrine will lead to the belittling of a good life, for, if we are to be saved by grace alone, where is the need of works at all? This the Jesuits argued with great force; indeed, the whole Jansenist attitude was abhorrent to their idea of order and discipline and to their conception of religion, which was, naturally, very acceptable to the King, since it postulated a society governed by religion and, further, by a

PERSECUTION  
OF THE  
JANSENISTS

religion into which a large measure of casuistry had perforce to be admitted. It must also be acknowledged that what remained of the old members of the 'Fronde' were almost exclusively Jansenists. They threatened to become a political party, and were critics of the Government of the day. Nevertheless, among their numbers were to be found some of the best Frenchmen of the time, including several Bishops, and the destruction of their famous educational seminary and literary society at Port Royal in 1710, and the extortion from the Pope, Clement XIV, of the Bull *Unigenitus* in 1713, by which all Jansenist opinions were condemned, were the last fatal deeds of the absolute monarch.

THE BULL  
UNIGENITUS,  
SEPT. 1713

LAST DAYS OF  
LOUIS XIV.  
HIS DEATH,  
1 SEPT., 1715

Louis XIV did not long survive the peace. His last days were clouded with domestic grief. In 1712 his grandson the Duke of Burgundy and the Duke's wife and eldest son succumbed to scarlet fever. The Duke, who had been Dauphin since the death of his worthless father Louis in 1711, though by nature a boy of ungovernable passion, insatiable appetite and arrogance, had so profited by the teaching of Fénelon, one of the best and most interesting of the French Churchmen of the day, and the influence of the Cartesian philosophers, that many looked forward to a new era under his beneficent rule. France, however, was not destined to be governed by a prince 'already ripe for a blessed eternity'. After the Duke's death the heir to the Crown, the future Louis XV, was a weakly child, who was not expected to live, and the regency was, by the will of Louis XIV, left to a Council of Regency, under the presidency of his nephew, the indolent and dissipated Philip, Duke of Orleans.

In his history of *The Age of Louis XIV* written a quarter of a century later, Voltaire has called it 'the Great Age'. The contrast with the age of Louis XV, in which Voltaire wrote, no doubt seemed to enhance the glories of his predecessor, and, strictly speaking, those glories belonged mainly to the earlier part of the reign. At the end of the seventeenth century France was unquestionably the first State in Europe, both in arms and in the arts, and throughout France the authority of

the King was undisputed. After the confusion and chaos of the 'Fronde' there was need, as Richelieu and Mazarin had seen, for a period of personal government, and the rôle of personal monarch was played by Louis to perfection. After all, he was the grandson of Philip II and the great-grandson of Charles V; one-quarter of him was Medici and only one-quarter French; he had little in him of the joyous Gallicism of his other grandfather, Henri IV. But the opportunities for a gradual devolution were neglected and every principle of sound finance ignored. The period, therefore, lasted too long, and the last words of the dying King to his young great-grandson are a terrible comment on the longest reign in the annals of France. 'Do not imitate my love for building and for and assuage the misery of my people.' The child prove when he came to man's estate, to be incapable of the many responsibilities laid upon him, and it remained for him, therefore, only to demonstrate the more completely all the vices and errors which lie in wait for absolute hereditary rule, when it has outlived its years of usefulness.

Those who wish to appreciate the grandeur of Louis XIV should assuredly visit Versailles. Its vast range of superb galleries with painted ceilings, vaunting, in mythological guise, the victories of the great King, its magnificent staircases, the immense formal gardens, the fountains playing where no water was, trees brought from Fontainebleau or Compiègne, the whole arising suddenly from an arid waste, as if by the touch of a magician's wand, even now give a strange impression of faery, and in those days, counted amongst the greatest wonders of the world, indeed, there was scarcely a monarch or petty prince in Europe who did not strive to emulate Versailles and ruined himself in doing so. A host of gorgeously attired men and women were, like the trees, uprooted from their own country seats and home duties and transplanted to Versailles, to act as chorus in a tragedy so remote from our ways, with its 'fêtes galantes', its spectacles, its luxury and its grand manners, that the whole episode still dazzles with the magnificence of antiquity.

Nor were literature, or art, or music forgotten. Molière may still claim to be regarded as a great playwright. Racine and

Boileau have well been called the last of the great classics, La Fontaine, La Rochefoucauld and Madame de Sévigny have made a permanent contribution, and not to French literature alone, and all of these flourished in the Age of Louis XIV. But all, in varying degrees, were harnessed to the chariot of the Great King and had to worship at his altar. Molière, for instance, was essentially of middle-class origin and outlook. He remains a great artist, but there is a bitter taste in him which would probably have been absent had he not been constrained to be a courtier and, above all, to do lip-service to a corrupt Church. La Fontaine again was a Bohemian, if ever there was one, a born rebel, like so many great French writers of a later epoch, hating regularity and order with all his heart. Yet he openly admitted the necessity of accommodating himself to the age, and his accurate descriptions of the whole state of society at the time would never have been permitted had they not been skilfully disguised in the manner of Aesop. So again with La Rochefoucauld—if there was sympathy with suffering humanity, it must be expressed in maxims, if there was strength of feeling, it must be masked under perfection of form—violence was bad taste. Even love-letters—and the worship of the fair sex was never more sedulously conducted by a smart and idle society than at Versailles—must be expressed in terms of analysis and precision, since the King himself could never unbend. There was but one form of good taste, one school and that the classic, above all, only one Maecenas, and he could really claim to be the absolute master, not only of the persons and property, but also of the utterances of his subjects.

It is true that there were stirrings in the domain of philosophy, in spite of the virtuous Bossuet, who roundly declared that philosophy was dangerous—'Our excellent master, Jesus Christ, has determined all things, the Christian need have no doubts about anything'. The influence of the great Descartes, 'Je pense, donc je suis', was growing, and some progress was being made in the exact sciences of mathematics, mechanics, optics and astronomy, but these tendencies were due more to contemporary thought in Europe generally, and particularly in England. In so far as Louis XIV was concerned, his main



endeavour was to formalize and keep them in the fold by penning them into the Institute and its Academies.

It was not until his declining years that one can say that the 'Age of Reason' was approaching, and then only in Paris as opposed to Versailles. There, indeed, after 1708 talk was prevalent that would never have been permitted at Versailles, and never in Paris in 1689. News is still not permitted at Versailles, but circulates freely in Paris, and rumour on the heels of news; lampoons are published, public speeches are even made against the King; Fénelon, the enlightened tutor of the Duke of Burgundy, is even propounding the revival of a Representative Assembly as a check upon the abuses of the Intendants and of the seignorial rights. St. Simon is dreaming of Peace and of Free Trade, Vauban of the misery of the common people and of the exactions under which they were ground down. A new generation is arising who are the forerunners of the philosophers of the Eighteenth Century, and among these young people Voltaire and Rousseau are growing to manhood.

But the King, though he is forced to sell his jewels and cut down his establishments on the one hand, is still dreaming of glory and spending lavishly on his latest palace at Marly. He is still the despot, and, though the foundations upon which his system is based are giving way, one cannot but admire the man who represented France so brilliantly when she was brilliant, and refused to admit her humiliation when she was humiliated. Louis XIV will go down to history, with Solomon and Augustus, as the ideal of a great King, and he was certainly a despot. But, though he was intelligent, he can lay no claim to be 'enlightened'—indeed, he would probably have disliked the appellation extremely. In any case, he exhausted the possibilities of absolute monarchy in France, and it is significant that the years that elapsed between his death and the Revolution were almost exactly equal in number to the years of his long reign.

## CHAPTER IV

### NORTH AND EASTERN EUROPE

**W**HILE the question whether France should dominate Western Europe was being fought out, a similar problem was engaging attention in the North-East.

✧ At the Peace of Westphalia, Sweden seemed not unlikely to make herself the predominant power there, and to turn the Baltic into a Swedish lake. Before the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, she had already gained from Russia the eastern shore as far south as Livonia, which belonged to Poland, and during that war had not only won from Denmark the island of Gothland and the province of Halland in pawn, but had gained free passage without toll for her ships through the Sound.<sup>1</sup> By the Peace of Westphalia itself, she was admitted a member of the Empire, and received the town and district of Wismar, all Pomerania west of the Oder, and the command of the mouths of that river, as well as the Archbishopric of Bremen and the Bishopric of Verden on the River Weser.

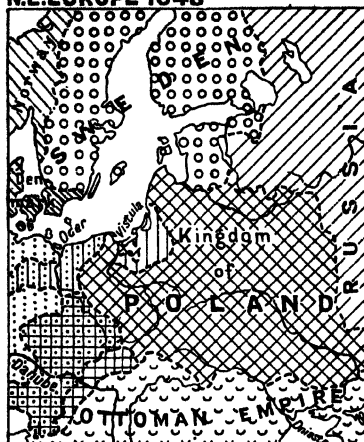
To understand the events which followed, it is necessary to study the map and grasp the situation of the other Powers concerned.

To the south of Sweden lay Denmark, which still held the southern provinces on the Swedish mainland and stretched along the Baltic as far as the Duchy of Mecklenburg. Then came Wismar and Western Pomerania which Sweden had just gained.

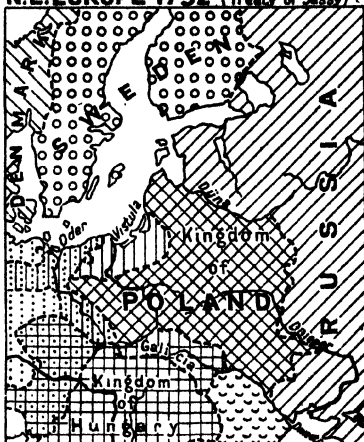
East of the Oder, we first come to Eastern Pomerania, which

<sup>1</sup> The Sound is the narrow passage between the island of Zealand, on which Copenhagen stands, and the province of Scania, then belonging to Denmark.

# N.E. EUROPE 1648



# N.E. EUROPE 1792 (Treaty of Jassy)



The Empire Prussia House of Habsburg Ottoman Empire

# N.E. EUROPE



English Miles



had been adjudged to the Elector of Brandenburg at the Peace of Westphalia. Further to the east lay West Prussia, which belonged to Casimir, King of Poland ; then East Prussia, between the Rivers Vistula and Niemen, which Brandenburg held as a fief of Poland ; next Courland, also a fief of Poland under its Duke, and finally Livonia, which Poland possessed in full sovereignty, and which marched with Esthonia, the furthest limit of Swedish territory on the south-eastern shore of the Baltic.

The chief Powers, therefore, interested in the question of the Baltic, were Sweden, Denmark, Brandenburg, Poland and Russia. Of these, Denmark had been steadily declining, since Sweden had broken away and declared her independence under the House of Vasa, 1523, while Poland, once under the powerful House of Jagellon, the most formidable kingdom in the north-east, was, under an elective King, John Casimir (1648–1669), rapidly falling a victim to an anarchical constitution, and to nobles who knew not how to obey, or to treat their serfs as human beings.

On the other hand Russia, under Alexis (1645–1676) of the new house of Romanoff, which had secured the throne in 1613, was beginning to recover the country which in earlier days had been wrested from her by the Turks on the South and the Poles on the West, and was laying the foundations for the future reforms and conquests of Peter the Great (1689–1725). Meanwhile, Brandenburg, under the Great Elector, Frederick William of Hohenzollern (1640–1688), had already started on that career of conquest, and of internal consolidation, which was to culminate in the reign of Frederick the Great (1740–1786).

Neither Russia nor Brandenburg, however, was as yet in a position to oppose Sweden alone. Now or never was the moment for Sweden to pursue the advantage already gained, and to complete the conquest of the Baltic shore. This was the aim of Charles X, the nephew of Gustavus Adolphus, who in 1654 succeeded, on the abdication of that interesting though somewhat erratic personality, Christina. Seizing, therefore, the pretext

DENMARK

POLAND

RUSSIA

BRANDENBURG

CHARLES X  
OF SWEDEN,  
1654–1660

that his title to the Swedish throne was disputed by John Casimir, King of Poland,<sup>1</sup> who at that moment was disputing with Russia for the possession of Livonia and the country about Kiev, he obtained from the Elector of Brandenburg free passage for his troops through Eastern Pomerania. Two successful campaigns in 1655-1656, culminating in a great victory at Warsaw (29 July, 1656), seemed to have brought Poland to his feet, but his successes had aroused the suspicions and jealousy of his neighbours, notably Denmark and Russia, while the Dutch were fearful lest Sweden should become preponderant in the Baltic. The Emperor, too, was openly hostile, the Tzar Alexis of Russia was threatening the Baltic provinces, and the Elector of Brandenburg, after extracting from Charles full recognition of his independence as ruler of East Prussia (Nov. 1656), came to terms with Poland (Sept. 1657), and, having wrung from Poland the same concession, ranged himself with the enemies of Sweden. Charles thus found himself

LEAGUE  
AGAINST  
CHARLES X,  
1657

opposed to a powerful combination of all those whose jealousies and fears he had aroused. The King of Sweden, however, was not easily dismayed. He promptly marched against the Danes, overran the mainland provinces, and captured the fortress of Friedericksodde (Oct. 1657). Pressing on in the depths of winter, he passed the Little and the Great Belts on the ice, laid siege to Copenhagen, and forced the King of Denmark to submit in the Treaty of Roskilde (Feb. 1658) which completed the expulsion of the Danes from Southern Sweden. Difficulties over the carrying out of this peace led to a renewal of hostilities into Denmark in July 1658. This time Charles was less successful, largely because the Dutch, finding their commercial interests injured by this struggle in the Baltic, sent a powerful fleet to the help of the Danes. England and France, equally concerned to keep the Baltic open to their ships, now joined Holland in an effort to re-establish peace. Charles X, a better statesman than his grandson and namesake Charles XII, sought to break up the coalition against him by coming to

<sup>1</sup> Casimir's father Sigismund III, had also been the heir to the Swedish throne but had been rejected because he was a Roman Catholic, 1604.

terms with Russia and Poland and so be left free to concentrate against Denmark, but his sudden death (13 Feb., 1660)

DEATH OF CHARLES X, 13 FEB., 1660. at the early age of thirty-seven completely changed the situation. His heir, Charles XI, was only four years old, and the regency which succeeded to power, concluded the Treaty of Oliva, near Danzig, with the Elector and the King of Poland, that of Copenhagen with Denmark, and that of Kardis with the Tzar.

Treaty of Oliva.—(1) Sweden to retain northern Livonia ; (2) Brandenburg to hold East Prussia in full sovereignty ; (3) the Polish Vasa renounced all claims on Sweden.

TREATY OF OLIVA, MAY 1660 ; OF COPENHAGEN, JUNE 1660 ; AND OF KARDIS, 1661. Treaty of Copenhagen.—(1) Denmark to cede the districts of Bohus, Halland, Scania and Bleking (i.e. all that Denmark had hitherto held on the mainland of Sweden) ; (2) Denmark recovered Bornholm and Trondhjem ; (3) the Baltic was not to be closed to foreign warships.

Treaty of Kardis.—(1) Sweden to retain her previous conquests in Russia (Carelia, Ingria, Esthonia) ; (2) Russia abandoned to Poland all claims on Southern Livonia.

Sweden had thus driven Denmark from her soil, and extended her conquests on the eastern shore of the Baltic by the acquisition of Northern Livonia. But on the southern coast she had made no advance, while Brandenburg had, by securing the full sovereignty of Prussia, freed herself from foreign interference.

For eleven years the tranquillity of the North was undisturbed, save for a war between the Tzar Alexis and Casimir of Poland, which ended by the cession to Russia of Kiev, Smolensk and the right bank of the Dnieper, at the peace of Andrussovo, 1667. Meanwhile changes in the internal condition of the four northern kingdoms took place, some of which were to have a profound influence on their future fortunes. In all these countries the struggle between aristocracy and monarchy, through which all nations have passed at some period of their history, was at that moment to be found in its acutest form, and in every case, except in that of Poland, the cause of monarchy prevailed, while even there the energy of her military King, John Sobieski (1674-1696), increased the personal prestige of the Crown.

In 1661, Frederick III of Denmark, profiting by the discontent caused by the late ill success against the Swedes, succeeded in overthrowing the nobility, who had hitherto monopolized the government, while they claimed exemption from taxation. The crown was declared hereditary; the capitulation or charter which the King had hitherto been forced to sign as a price of his election was annulled, and the privileges of the nobility abolished. In Sweden, where the constitution was originally very similar, the monarchy had to wait. Under the rule of the Regency, which governed during the minority of Charles XI, the nobles returned to power, and the Crown was impoverished by lavish grants to them out of the royal lands.

In Brandenburg, a far more complicated task lay before the Great Elector. The Hohenzollerns, originally Counts of a small district in the Suabian Jura, had been Burgraves of Nuremberg in the Middle Ages. Thence, at the close of the fifteenth century, they had moved north; and by grant, by succession, and by conquest, had collected under their hand a number of territories, which fell roughly into three groups.<sup>1</sup> In the centre stood the Electoral Mark of Brandenburg,<sup>2</sup> which gave Frederick William his seat in the Electoral chamber of the Imperial Diet. To this had been added the New Mark in the sixteenth century, and by the Peace of Westphalia, Magdeburg and Halberstadt on the Elbe, Eastern Pomerania and the Bishopric of Cammin, and the Bishopric of Minden on the Weser. Then came the Duchy of East Prussia, held as a fief of Poland. Thirdly, the Duchies of Cleves and the Mark on the Rhine near Cologne.


These three groups were isolated from each other. The peoples who inhabited them were not of the same race. Those in the centre and the west were German, while Pomerania and East Prussia were largely Slav. They had no bond of union except the personal connexion with their ruler.

<sup>1</sup> The districts in Suabia and Franconia, that is, Hohenzollern, and the country round Nuremberg (Anspach and Baireuth) went to younger branches.

<sup>2</sup> Divided into the Altmark, the Mittelmark and the Kurmark.

**Extent at accession of Great Elector 1640**

*Extent at accession of Great Elector  
Gains during his reign (1640-1688)*



**Gains up to accession of Frederick the Great 1740**

**Gains during his reign (1740-1786)**



He held his possessions by different titles. Each had their separate 'Estates' or assemblies, their laws and customs, and no native of one district could hold office in the other. The 'Estates' were formed of feudal nobles, who were ignorant and obstructive, with great powers over their serfs. Finally the whole country was in a backward condition ; its soil was for the most part unfruitful, and its industries few.

If Brandenburg was ever to advance to the dignity of a united State, and to be respected by her neighbours, it was essential that these scattered territories should be brought together. Yet the country was not yet ready for a united legislative assembly. The provincial differences were too great, the jealousies too deep. The only alternative lay in strengthening the personal authority of the Elector, and in making him the pivot and mainspring of the government. Leaving, therefore, the separate provincial assemblies or estates their ancient forms, the Elector proceeded gradually, to circumscribe their powers, while he controlled the local administration by appointing the officials and by subordinating them to the central 'Privy Council', in which the governors or 'Stadt-holders' of the various provinces found seats beside the higher ministers. This council, originally that of the Mark of Brandenburg alone, was now made a board of supervision over all the various provinces, and served as an advisory council to the Elector himself, though he still retained the right of ultimate decision on all important matters. The very want of unity, facilitated his designs. The various provincial estates tried to oppose these measures, but in vain, one province could always be played off against another, and, eventually deprived of the strength which union might have given, they all gradually submitted with murmurs of discontent.

A like policy was adopted towards the nobles. Afraid of arousing too great opposition, he left them their rights of manorial jurisdiction and of police, while he taught them to look to his service for advancement and for honour.

The whole system of taxation was revised. In the towns, of the Marks an excise was substituted for 'the old house and land tax ; the revenue was increased by import and

export duties and by careful administration of the Elector's private domains, which were extensive, more especially in East Prussia. Conscious that the weakness of his country was due to the scantiness of the population, to the sterility of the soil, and ignorance of improved methods of agriculture and of industry, he did his best to find a remedy. Colonies were planted, and, on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, a refuge was found for some 20,000 'nimble' Frenchmen, who taught the Brandenburgers how to turn their waste sands into profitable 'potherb gardens'. Manufactures and trade were encouraged, and canals cut, more especially the famous one which bears his name, and which, running between the Oder and the Spree, the tributary of the Elbe, connected the two great rivers of Brandenburg together. But this was not enough without an effective army. He therefore substituted for the ill-organized and insubordinate feudal array a standing army, levied partly by conscription and partly by pay, under officers of his own appointment, and placed the military organization and finance under a separate department. These reforms were carried out gradually, indeed, but persistently, and in the pursuit of his end the Elector had little regard for traditional rights or for legality. Those who opposed his measures were, if unimportant, disregarded, and if formidable, removed. Thus Rhode, the burgomaster of Königsberg, was imprisoned for life; and when the Prussian noble, Kalkstein, dared to break his parole, he was seized, in violation of all international rights, on Polish ground, and executed.

The results were soon to be seen. In 1672, Charles XI joined Louis XIV in his Dutch War, while Christian V of Denmark and the Elector sided with the opposing coalition. The Swedish King was indeed victorious over the Danes, but was decisively beaten by the Elector at Fehrbellin when he was threatening Berlin. It was the first battle which the

BATTLE OF  
FEHRBELLIN,  
JUNE 1675

Swedes had lost since the days of Gustavus Adolphus, except where they had been overwhelmed by superior numbers, and it was followed by the Brandenburgers overrunning and occupying the Swedish possessions in Germany. Stettin fell before the end

of 1677 and Stralsund in November 1678. But Louis XIV now came to the aid of his Swedish ally, and by invading the Great Elector's possessions in Western Germany, while the Emperor and the Princes remained neutral, compelled him to restore Western Pomerania to Sweden by the Peace of St. Germain (July 1679).

For some twenty years, peace reigned on the shores of the Baltic, and when the struggle began again the scenes had shifted and new actors had come upon the stage.

In one way Sweden profited from her misfortunes. The disaster of Fehrbellin was laid to the charge of the Regency, since the alliance with France had been their work, bribed, it was rumoured, by French gold; and Charles XI who attained his majority in the same year (1675), taking advantage of the popular discontent, felt himself strong enough to revoke many of the grants of royal lands, to overthrow the authority of the oligarchical Senate, and re-establish the personal authority of the Crown. He was a capable ruler, economical and energetic, and his early death in 1697 was a grave misfortune for Sweden.

His son and successor, Charles XII, therefore, found Sweden, in so far as internal conditions went, somewhat better prepared for war than in 1672. The bent of the young King—he was only fifteen—was essentially military. Though not ill-educated, the only serious study for which he cared was that of military engineering. He preferred to read the history of Alexander the Great, whom he admired as the conqueror of the then known world at the age of thirty-two, and the Norse sagas which told of the heroic deeds of the Vikings of old. For the softer amusements, for wine, for gambling, even for the society of women, he had no liking. He loved rather the most dangerous and violent sports: the pursuit on foot of the bear amid the winter snows, or wild nightly raids in the streets of Stockholm to the terror of the peaceful inhabitants.

The character of the man was well displayed in his features and in his dress. The abnormally high yet narrow forehead, the long and prominent aquiline nose, the pale thin face with steel-blue eyes, portrayed the believer in predestination,

ACCESSION OF  
CHARLES XII,  
1697

the man of limited ideas, but of intense energy and pitiless determination; while his sombre-coloured coat, his short-cut hair devoid of the then fashionable wig, his high boots which he always wore, well fitted the warrior King.

One year previously, 1696, his future rival, Peter the Great, had finally risen to power. The period which preceded this

PETER THE event had been a troublous time for Russia.  
GREAT, 1698-1725 This was due partly to the measures Alexis, his father, had taken to strengthen the executive, partly to the reforms introduced by Nikon, the Patriarch of Moscow, in the ancient service books and ritual, so as to make them conform to those of the Greek Church elsewhere.

The nobles were indignant at the first; the second led to the rise of the sect of the 'old believers', who denounced Alexis as Anti-Christ, welcomed persecution, and in one district were fanatical enough to immolate themselves by a fire of their own lighting.

After the brief reign of Feodor, his eldest son, 1676-1682, these troubles were intensified by the disputes about the succession. At first the two boys, Ivan, son of the first wife of Alexis, and Peter, the son of the second, were declared joint Tzars, with Sophia, the sister of Ivan, as Regent. A female Regent was unknown in Russia, and the whole arrangement was impossible. The partisans of the various parties intrigued for power, and the Streltsi,<sup>1</sup> who had got completely out of hand, sided now with one party, now the other. Murder and executions followed, and anarchy seemed likely to ensue.

PETER SOLE  
RULER IN  
RUSSIA, 1696

In 1689, however, the Regent Sophia was overthrown by the partisans of Peter, and the death of Ivan in 1696 left him the sole occupier of the throne at the age of twenty-five.

The character of the young Tzar, who was so profoundly to influence the future history of his country, was one of violent contradictions. A man of commanding stature and of a highly coloured complexion, he had a broad and open countenance, though somewhat marred by a small and flat nose, eyes of piercing blackness, and a sunny smile wher

<sup>1</sup> The Streltsi were an hereditary caste of soldiers with special privileges, not unlike the Praetorian Guard in ancient Rome.

not in anger. He was simple, natural and straightforward ; and, at ordinary times, an attractive personality.

Nevertheless, his passions were under no control, and his passions were those of an animal. He was dirty in his personal habits. His appetite for food and spirits was insatiable, and he was often drunk for days. He was passionate, revengeful and cruel, and when his anger was aroused, often fell into epileptic fits. These purely animal qualities were, however, relieved by immense nervous energy, and by mental gifts of a high quality. To acute gifts of observation, and the power of mastering the minutest details of any subject he took up, he added a faculty of learning from experience, a brain receptive of new ideas and a genius for method and organization.

In some ways his very contradictions well fitted him for his people and for his times. Russia needed a ruler of constructive power, and of far-reaching views, while his restless vigour, his disregard of scruples and his tyrannous ways suited a backward and uncivilized nation, accustomed to despotic rule, and demanding a master who would drive them along the path of progress.

The aims of the foreign policy of Peter the Great centred upon the chief interest of his youth : a love for the sea.

FOREIGN POLICY OF PETER When in 1689 he had overthrown his sister, the Regent Sophia, Russia had but one outlet at Archangel, on the White Sea, and that was of little use, since it was frozen during the winter months. It was therefore the dream of Peter to gain a footing on the shores of the Caspian Sea, the Black Sea, and the Baltic and to unite the waters of the Volga, the Don, the Dnieper, and Neva, which run into these seas, by a series of canals.

Thus he hoped to make Russia the highway of communication and of commerce between the South-East and North-West. To these schemes of foreign conquest was added the desire to stand forth as the representative of the Greek Church and the liberator of the Christians under the blasting rule of the infidel.

Already in 1696, he had taken a prominent part in the War of the Holy League, and had torn from the Moslem the

possession of Azof on the sea of that name, itself an arm of the Black Sea. Peter, however, had always been more attracted by the West than by the East. From his earliest youth he had admired, and tried to learn all things Western, and the journey which he took through Western Europe in 1697, immediately after his accession to undisputed power, served to intensify this respect. To gain, therefore, the Eastern shore of the Baltic, and thereby to 'open a window' to Western civilization became henceforth the passion of his life, and shortly after his return an opportunity presented itself.

• The Swedish rule in Livonia, which dated only from the Peace of Oliva, 1660, was distasteful to the German nobles, the descendants of the old crusading order of the Livonian Knights, especially since Charles XI had been unsparing in his resumption of the State property which he found in their hands, and had answered their protests by the imprisonment of the ringleaders, in violation of a safe conduct. One of them, however, John Reinhold Patkul, had effected his escape, and was now seeking for aid to throw off the foreign yoke. The foes of Sweden listened to his appeal, and in 1699, a coalition was formed by Frederick IV of Denmark, and Augustus, Elector of Saxony, who had been chosen King of Poland on the death of John Sobieski (1696), while Peter the Great himself promised to join as soon as the Turkish War was ended.

✓ The liberation of Livonia was the pretext, but the real aim of the League was to conquer the Baltic possessions of the Swedish King and, on the part of Denmark, to gain Schleswig-Holstein, which belonged to a brother-in-law of Charles XII.

The war-loving Charles XII eagerly accepted the challenge ; and pouncing upon his opponents before they had time to unite, seemed likely to win an easy victory. Setting out for Copenhagen, he seized that town, while the King of Denmark was engaged in Holstein, and after a struggle of six weeks, Frederick IV was forced to sue for peace (August 1700) at Travendahl.

Charles then sailed for the Gulf of Finland, and attacked the Russians as they were besieging the town of Narva.

Charles had but 8,500 men, his opponents 40,000. But the Russian troops were ill-organized and raw. Peter was not present, the commander-in-chief, Le Croy, and many of the officers were German and unknown to their troops. On the first onslaught of the Swedes, the centre broke with the cry 'The Germans are betraying us!' The general himself, saying that 'the Devil alone could command such troops', took refuge in the enemy's camp, and though the two wings fought bravely, they did not act together. The left wing capitulated before the sun went down, and the right wing in the morning. Charles now turned southwards, defeated the Saxons near Riga (July 1701), occupied Courland, and pushing into Poland, seized Warsaw, May 1702.

His wisest policy would now have been to concentrate his attack on the Russians, and to have strengthened his position in his own districts of Esthonia, Carelia and Ingria, for Augustus, finding but scant support in Poland, would probably have come to terms. But Charles, wrongly regarding him as his chief enemy, was determined to deprive him of his Polish kingdom. He therefore rejected all overtures, and continued the war. In July 1703, the Polish Diet was forced to depose Augustus and to elect Stanislas Leszczinski, a Polish noble.

Now, at all events, Charles should have turned against the Tzar, who had taken advantage of his absence to occupy Carelia and Ingria. But Charles was bent on humbling Augustus completely. He therefore marched into Saxony, violating by the way the neutrality of Silesia, which belonged to the Emperor, where he declared himself the protector of the Protestants against Austrian oppression, and finally dictated terms to the unfortunate Elector, at Altranstadt near Leipzig (14 September, 1706).

CHARLES AT ALTRANSTADT, SEPT. 1706

Augustus (1) acknowledged Stanislas as King of Poland; (2) renounced the Russian alliance; (3) delivered Patkul to the vengeance of Charles XII, who had him broken on the wheel.

It was at this moment that Louis XIV, then in great straits owing to the disasters of the Spanish Succession War,

sought the alliance of Charles. The prospect was sufficiently alarming to the Grand Alliance to cause the Emperor to seek to conciliate Charles by acknowledging Stanislas as King of Poland (March 1707) and to make Marlborough visit the Swedish monarch in his camp and try and dissuade him from intervening in the West. Marlborough found less cause for alarm than he had feared. Charles was too sincere a Protestant to ally himself with Louis, and had very different intentions. He was able to wring from the Emperor concessions to the Protestants in Silesia, and, this done (Sept. 1707), he broke up his camp and marched off Eastwards to settle his account with Peter.

Charles had now spent seven years since the victory of Narva, and these years had not been wasted by his foe. Taking advantage of the absence of the Swedish King, Peter had defeated the few troops left in the Eastern Baltic Provinces, strengthened his position there, and even laid the foundation of his future capital, St. Petersburg. Charles should therefore have directed his efforts to recover these dominions. Instead of that, he hoped to dictate terms in Moscow itself, and moved in that direction as far as Mohilef on the Dnieper. Peter, adopting the strategy which was to ruin Napoleon I in later times, retreated before him, contesting his advance where opportunity offered. Now, however, Charles stayed his course, and leaving part of his army under Lewenhaupt, turned southwards. He hoped to secure the aid of Mazeppa, the hetman or chief of the Cossacks on the Russian bank of the Dnieper, who was intriguing with both sides in the hope of thereby establishing his independence. The step was fatal. Peter had little difficulty in crushing Lewenhaupt, who fell back on the main army with the loss of 5,000 men.

The Swedish army, thus reduced, was decimated by the severe winter of 1708-1709. When summer came at last, his generals urged Charles to retreat. But the foolhardy King declared that were an angel to command him he would refuse, and invested Pultawa, which was held by a Russian detachment, for 'a diversion' as he said. Peter was now ready. Since the

BATTLE OF  
PULTAWA,  
8 JULY, 1709



defeat at Narva he had been improving and organizing his army, and training his soldiers in numerous petty conflicts. 'We shall be often beaten,' he had said, 'but in time the Swedes will teach us how to beat them.' The moment had now come. Reminding his troops that they fought not for the Tzar alone, but for their country and the Orthodox Church, he ordered the attack. The advantage was entirely on the Russian side. Charles had but 16,500 Swedes who were fit to fight (5,000 more were sick), and 3,000 Cossacks under Mazeppa, who could not be relied upon, and only four guns, while he himself had been wounded in the foot in a reconnaissance and had to be carried in a litter. Peter brought 44,000 troops and seventy-two cannon into the field. At the first onslaught, indeed, the left wing of the Russians was driven back, but elsewhere the Russians stood firm, and finally the Swedes, overpowered by numbers and by the artillery fire, broke and fled. Eleven thousand were killed or taken prisoners, and, a few days after, the rest capitulated.

The Swedish army was annihilated. Charles himself was first thrown on to a horse, but that was killed, and then into a carriage, but the horses were shot down. Finding another mount, he escaped with difficulty, and crossing the Dnieper took refuge in Turkish territory at Bender. There he remained, a half-willing captive, for five years, 1709-1714, which he, for the most part, spent in fruitless attempts to find allies.

CHARLES XII  
AT BENDER,  
1709-1714

The Sultan was indeed induced to declare war on Russia, and in 1711 Peter, surrounded by a Turkish force, only escaped capitulation by bribing the Grand Vizier to grant him terms. Even so, he had to abandon the port of Azof and his grip on the Black Sea. The Sultan, satisfied with this important success, had neither the wish nor perhaps the power to do more.

TREATY OF  
THE PRUTH,  
JULY 1711

Meanwhile in the North, the results of Pultawa were far-reaching. Peter had little difficulty in finally securing the eastern Baltic shore, and Augustus of Saxony at once denounced the Treaty of Altranstadt and quickly regained his Polish throne. Denmark again declared war, to be shortly joined by Frederick I of Prussia, who was eager to secure

Swedish Pomerania. When, therefore, in 1714 Charles at last returned from exile, he found himself opposed by a new and still more formidable coalition, which had already overrun nearly all the trans-Baltic possessions of Sweden. In the following year, 1715, George, Elector of Hanover, and now King of England, joined the League, tempted by the offer of Bremen and Verden. Still Charles would not yield, though a British squadron, which was dispatched to the Baltic to protect British trade, was also largely instrumental in causing the fall of Stralsund (Dec. 1715). He now attempted to profit by the quarrels of his enemies, and on the advice of Goertz, a man of Holstein, his new-found Minister, he offered to cede to Peter his Baltic acquisitions, if the Tzar would help him against his other foes.

Peter, who was at odds with George I over Mecklenburg, accepted, but whether this strange alliance would have lasted may well be doubted. In any case the death of the Swedish warrior King, as he was besieging a petty town in Norway, then a dependency of Denmark, decided the matter. His death was followed by a complete change of government in Sweden. As he left no son, the nobles were once more able to regain power. They elected his sister, Ulrica Eleonora, Queen, and, on her abdication in 1720, acknowledged her husband, Frederick of Hesse Cassel, as King, and declared the Crown hereditary. The royal authority was, however, practically destroyed. The Diet, composed of four benches or houses, the nobles, clergy, burghers and peasants, in which, however, the nobles had chief power, was allowed to meet without royal summons, and could not be dissolved without its own consent. The royal veto on legislation was abolished, and the legislative power of the Diet was unrestrained, save by the strange proviso that it could not by any measure increase the royal authority. The Diet also exercised supreme authority over the administration while it sat, but at other times this lay with the Senate, nominated by the Crown out of a list presented by the Diet. In this Senate the King had two votes. For the rest his authority was restricted to signing orders issued by the Senate, while later, in 1756, the

DEATH OF  
CHARLES XII,  
DEC. 1718,  
FOLLOWED BY  
ALTERATIONS  
IN THE CON-  
STITUTION

Ministers had printed forms of the sign manual, which they could affix to such orders at will.

The death of Charles XII was followed by the conclusion of peace, first between Sweden and Hanover (Nov. 1719), then with Prussia (Feb. 1720), and then with Denmark (July 1720), the last two concluded with the help of English mediation—since George I was anxious to maintain Sweden as a rival to Russia in the Baltic. It looked as if England might even carry her support of Sweden to the length of war, but the South Sea Bubble led to the fall of the Stanhope-Sunderland Ministry, and, with Walpole in power, England dropped her bellicose tone, and Sweden, left isolated, was obliged to come to terms with Russia at Nystadt (Sept. 1720).

SWEDEN MAKES  
PEACE AT  
NYSTADT, 1721

Sweden had already surrendered Bremen and Verden to Hanover, and Stettin and the mouths of the Oder to Prussia, while Denmark was allowed to deprive the Duke of Schleswig-Holstein of Schleswig. She now ceded to Russia, Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria and part of Carelia.

Of all the Baltic Provinces, Sweden only retained Finland, part of which she lost in 1743, and part of Western Pomerania, which she was to retain till 1815.

The great Northern war, which had thus lasted twenty-one years, profoundly affected the fortunes, not only of the North but of Western Europe. Sweden had failed to make the Baltic a Swedish lake, and henceforth fell into the position of a minor Power. Poland, though she did not lose in territory, had been devastated by war and torn by the quarrels of the two parties; the rivalries remained, and Poland, the victim of faction and of anarchy, was rapidly declining. On the other hand, the Elector of Brandenburg, now King of Prussia, had secured the mouths of the Oder, one of the great commercial arteries of Northern Germany; and, more important than all, Russia had finally seated herself on the Baltic and had begun to influence Western politics.

Some would attribute the fall of Sweden to the bad strategy and want of statesmanship of Charles XII, a fine fighting soldier, but not a really great general, others would ascribe it to the feeble and selfish policy of the oligarchical rule that

followed. That Charles precipitated the catastrophe, or that the aristocrats intensified it, few would deny. Yet the causes of the decline of Sweden lie deeper, and the wonder is, not that Sweden fell, but that she did not fall before. The truth of the matter is, that the position held by Sweden since the days of Gustavus Adolphus had been an artificial one, due to temporary conditions and to the personal influence of her great kings. The dominions which she had attempted to weld together had no common bond of union either of race or institutions, of religion, or of sympathy. They could, therefore, only be held by force, and this the geographical distribution of their parts made difficult. The foreign possessions formed a somewhat narrow circle, broken at several points, and with an enormous 'hinterland' behind. Possibly they might have been based upon a powerful Baltic fleet, but the Swedes have never been a seafaring people. It was therefore inevitable that, as soon as strong kingdoms had established themselves behind her narrow coast-line, her dominions would fall to pieces. It was now decided that these two Powers should be Russia and Prussia, and it is in the growth of these two kingdoms that we must look for the most significant results of the Northern war.

Peter had now 'opened a window to the west'. But to fulfil his idea, it was necessary to introduce Western civilization and Western forms of government. The reforms of Peter had been commenced as soon as he began to reign, but were now completed. His model was German rather than French, and he was assisted by the

German philosopher Leibnitz. Instead of the Zemski Sobor, or ancient representative assembly, and the Douma of the Boiars or nobles, which had controlled the executive, he substituted a Senate of nine, appointed by himself and under his control. This Senate was at once a Great Council for deliberation and for the issue of Imperial decrees, a High Court of Finance, and a Supreme Tribunal of Justice. Under it stood ten colleges, or chambers of central administration, and under them again seventy-two local governments, under a governor appointed by the Senate, and assisted by a council elected by the nobles ;

while the towns were entrusted to elected town councils, under the supreme magistrate of St. Petersburg, nominated by the Tzar. The villages were, however, left under their old communal system of the 'Mir', governed by a village council which periodically allotted the lands, which were tilled in common, according to the size of the families, and were responsible to the central governments, or to their lord, if they had one, for the poll tax imposed by Peter.

By the institution of this poll tax, however, the position of those peasants who, besides the communal lands, held others of a lord by payment of a rent in kind, was seriously affected. To secure the regular payment of the tax, they were forbidden to leave their lands, and thus became fixed to the soil and confused with the serfs, who held their land in virtue of labour services due to their lord.

The collegiate system was also applied to the Church. The office of Patriarch was abolished. In his place the Holy  
 CHURCH Synod was established, formed of bishops, and  
presided over by a procurator-general, often a  
soldier, the direct representative of the Tzar. The object of  
this change is thus explained by Peter himself: 'It will  
prevent the common people from being dazzled by the  
splendour and glory of the highest pastor, and from thinking  
that the spiritual power is higher than that of the civil auto-  
crat, as belonging to another and a better realm.'

In a word, he desired to check ecclesiastical pretensions, and to make the Church, so far as administration went, a department of State, under the complete control of the civil authority. It should, however, be remembered that, in questions of belief and matters of purely spiritual discipline, the Russian Church has always held its own as an integral part of the whole Eastern Church, and would resist any change of this kind without its consent. Nor has the civil power ever disputed this claim. Moreover, Peter had no desire for absolute uniformity. Though no propagandism  
was allowed, all sects were tolerated except the Jesuits,  
because they were political intriguers; Jews, 'because they  
were rascals and cheats', and the extreme fanatics of the  
'old believers'.

To enforce this autocratic rule, a secret Chancery of Police was organized ; while in the place of the Streltsi, who had attempted to restore the power of Sophia, a regular standing army and navy, based on conscription, were established, and, to support the whole fabric, a more regular system of taxation.

The reforms of Peter did not stop here. Aware that this novel system would not suit the old Russian habits and customs, and that these are stronger than out-  
SOCIAL AND ECONOMICAL ward forms of government, he attempted to  
v~~al~~ter them as well. Without destroying the old nobility of birth, he instituted a nobility based on service, which took precedence of it. All nobles were forced to serve either in the army, the navy, or the civil service, and this official nobility was divided into fourteen grades. He abolished the law of equal succession among the sons of nobles, because  
v~~h~~is tended to impoverish the landed nobility, and ordered that all the land should go to the eldest, or to one chosen by the father. Believing that the monastic life led to idle-  
v~~n~~ess, he suppressed the smaller monasteries, and ordered all those that remained to support hospitals and schools. No one under thirty, and no noble or State official was allowed to become a monk without the royal leave. The Eastern seclusion of women was in every way discouraged, Western dress introduced at court, and all who insisted on wearing the beard were taxed. On education, the views of the Tzar  
v~~w~~ere strictly practical. Elementary schools were started in the provinces, and in the towns technical schools, while in St. Petersburg, an academy of the sciences was founded. By these measures he hoped to make his people industrious and well-informed, but he also wished to increase the wealth and prosperity of his country, and for that purpose agriculture, manufactures and commerce were promoted by the protective system, which was then everywhere in vogue.

This attempt to revolutionize the whole system of Russian government and society naturally led to grave discontent. Some asserted that the Tzar was no true Russian, but a substituted child, or an illegitimate son of his mother by a German. By others he was denounced, as his father had been, as Anti-Christ. But Peter was not to be deterred.

He had cruelly suppressed the Streltsi at the beginning of his reign because they supported Sophia his sister, acting in some cases as executioner himself, and had mercilessly punished all who opposed him. His own family were not spared. His sister, Sophia, was immured in a convent, and his first wife, Eudoxia, divorced, because they represented old ideas. Even his son, Alexis, for the same reason, was cruelly treated, and when he took to intrigues, was beaten to death.

Nor were his difficulties less with regard to his new administrative machine. To work it, it was necessary to have foreigners, and these were naturally disliked, while the Russians, who, after a preliminary training, often abroad, were admitted to office, proved in many cases hopelessly inefficient and corrupt.

This is well illustrated by Peter's remonstrances. He bids them be serious when at business; not to talk too much or interrupt others; and not to behave like market women. He says they make laughing-stocks of themselves, and above all he accuses them in bitter words of being bribed. Peter, in fact, was learning that honesty and efficiency cannot be forced upon an uncivilized people by a tyrant's rod.

Nevertheless he persevered, and when in 1725 he died at the early age of fifty-three, he had changed a patriarchal, Oriental despotism into one of modern type, and established the bureaucratic system of nineteenth-century Russia.

The question whether his policy was wise is much disputed to this day. Some say that in no other way could Russia have been reformed, or fitted to take part as she has since done in European affairs. This school declares that the confusion which followed his death is not to be attributed to the dislocation and discontent caused by his reforms alone. The continued disputes with regard to the succession,<sup>1</sup> the break in continuity of policy, and the factions which resulted from the constant changes; the want of patriotism and the selfishness of the nobles; the absence of any person of com-

<sup>1</sup> From the death of Peter, 1725, to the accession of Catherine II, 1762, a period of only thirty-eight years, three Tzars and three Tzarinas ruled.

manding power on or off the throne ; all these things they say must be taken into account. This is not to be denied, yet some of these very evils were exaggerated, if not caused, by Peter's reforms. The character of those who adopted Peter's ideas was not really altered. They only acquired a thin veneer of Western civilization, and with it many Western vices. The new institutions caused discontent, and were too new to bear the strain. The presence of foreigners aggravated the party strife, and led to the formation of a counter/ (old Russian) party.

Meanwhile in the midst of all these troubles, the power of the bureaucracy, that is of the Government officials, grew, and often was too strong for the Tzar himself ; the factions among the administrators often led to palace revolutions, and Russian government tended to become a despotism controlled by its own officials, and tempered by assassination. A consideration of these evils has led many to believe that Peter's reforms were a grave blunder, since they arrested natural development and checked the real, if slower, progress which would otherwise have come about. Nay, some assert that Peter is chiefly responsible for the conditions which eventually produced the catastrophic revolution of 1917 ; a situation in which a powerful official class who would not hear of reform was confronted by a people whose indignation had been aroused to blood heat by two centuries of oppression, and yet who had never been given the opportunity of self-government and so lacked the training and sense of moderation which responsibility alone can give. Again, it is not without significance that there are many features about his experiment—the hurried desperate Westernization, the emphasis on education as a concomitant of industrial production under modern conditions, the frantic efforts of the executive to stamp out a deeply ingrained corruption in its administrators, no less than the occasional ruthless cruelty—which inevitably recall much of the development of the present Communist régime. However this may be, we may at least assert that, for good or for ill, the reforms of Peter the Great have left an indelible / impress on the history and character of his country.



## CHAPTER V

### THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS

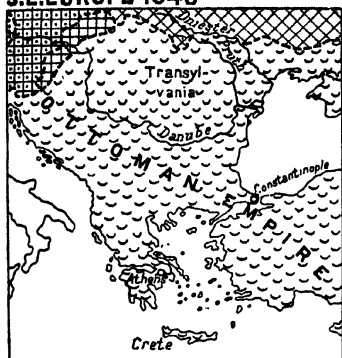
**D**URING the latter half of the seventeenth century the Ottoman Empire, which since the middle of the sixteenth century had been rapidly declining under the effects of inefficient and corrupt government, showed signs of unexpected vitality. The revival was due, not to the Sultans, who were, with few exceptions, nonentities, but to the influence of two remarkable men, Mahomed Kiuprili (1656-1661), and Achmet, his son (1661-1676), belonging to an Albanian family, which had been long settled in Asia Minor. When, at the age of seventy, Mahomed Kiuprili was appointed Grand Vizier by the mother of the young Sultan, he could neither read nor write. His aim was not to originate any new reforms, but to reawaken the ancient military spirit and racial pride of the Turks, accompanied by a contempt of all things Western, and to re-establish discipline and obedience. Under his just but remorseless rule, the insubordination of the Janissaries <sup>1</sup> was repressed and their ringleaders executed, and the military service of the Spahis <sup>2</sup> rigorously enforced.

A Christian Patriarch was hanged for treasonable correspondence with the enemy; the most powerful in the land felt

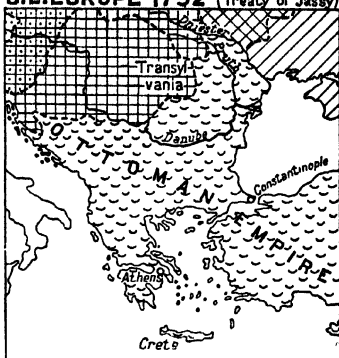
<sup>1</sup> The Janissaries were originally formed of Christian children, torn at an early age from their parents and brought up under military discipline, and not allowed to marry. With no stake or position in the land, they were the devoted servants of the Sultan. But in the sixteenth century Turks were admitted, who were allowed to marry, and even to engage in trade. They thus lost their peculiar virtues and became insubordinate.

<sup>2</sup> The Spahis or Timarists were Turks who held their lands on terms of military service.

# S.E. EUROPE 1648



# S.E. EUROPE 1792 (Treaty of Jassy)



The Empire

House of Habsburg

Ottoman Empire

# S.E. EUROPE



the weight of Mahomed Kiuprili's heavy hand, and it has been computed that the number of those who fell before his inexorable justice amounted to no less than 500 a month. Meanwhile, at no time were the envoys of the Western Powers treated with greater contempt. The effect of this policy was instantaneous. Kiuprili first turned his attention to the war against Venice, which had broken out in 1645.

TURKISH  
SUCCESSSES  
AGAINST  
VENICE,  
1657-1661

At the moment of his accession to office, the Venetian fleet held the Dardanelles, and threatened Constantinople. After a severe struggle they were driven from the Straits, with the loss of their admiral, Mocenigo; the islands of Lemnos and Tenedos were recovered, and the siege of Candia in Crete was pushed on with vigour (1659-1661). Meanwhile Mahomed had interfered in

INTERFERENCE  
IN AFFAIRS OF  
HUNGARY

the affairs of Hungary. That large country, which lies between the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube, was at that time divided into three parts. In the west lay the thin strip in the possession of the Habsburgs with its capital, Pressburg; to the south and east the Turks ruled the great plain from the Danube to the river Theiss; to the east stood Transylvania, then tributary to the Sultan.

Declaring that George Rakoczy, Prince of Transylvania, was acting too independently, the Vizier overthrew him and replaced him by a nominee of his own. The Transylvanians appealed to the Emperor Leopold, and thus the struggle became one between the Turk and the Habsburg for the possession of Hungary and the lower Danube.

At this moment Mahomed died (1661) and was succeeded by his son Achmet, who, a well-educated man, continued the policy of his father without its merciless severity.

ACHMET  
KIUPRILI,  
1661-1676

Having collected an army of 120,000 men (June 1663) he invaded and overran Transylvania. Pressing on into Austrian Hungary, which had long been discontented under Habsburg rule, he crossed the Danube at Gran, took Neuhaüsel (Sept. 1663), and even ravaged Moravia and Silesia. However, the main Austrian fortresses on the Danube still held out and next year Achmet struck further south, attempting an invasion of Styria.

Here he was opposed by an Imperial army under Montecuculi, including substantial contingents from the Rhine League, and reinforced by some French troops, which Louis XIV had sent out of irritation at the flogging and imprisonment of his ambassador at Constantinople.

At St. Gothard on Raab (Aug. 1664) Montecuculi met and routed the Turks, whose defeat was notable as the first sign of their waning military power. It was not followed up, however; the Emperor, suspicious of the loyalty of the Hungarians, and jealous of the French, at once offered terms, and by the Treaty of Vasvar acknowledged the suzerainty of the Sultan over Transylvania, and left him in possession of Neuhaüsel and all Hungary from Lake Balaton to the Danube.

Achmet now turned to the siege of Candia. In September 1669, in spite of French assistance, the town capitulated and the Venetians surrendered the island of Crete, which had been in their hands since the thirteenth century. The conquest of Crete marks the high tide of Turkish conquest, and was the last Christian possession won by the Turks in the Mediterranean.

The indefatigable Vizier then moved to the valley of the Dnieper. Here the Cossacks of the Ukraine, or March of the Dnieper, whose territory had lately been ceded to Poland by the Tzar Alexis at the Treaty of Andrussovo (p. 67), were resisting the attempt of Poland to establish her authority and had called in the Turks to help them. The Poles were defeated, and their feeble king Michael surrendered the disputed territory (Oct. 1672). At this moment Poland displayed a spark of its ancient valour. The Diet indignantly refused

to ratify the treaty and found a leader in John Sobieski, one of their nobles. This man, a true representative of the old prowess of his race, reversed the fortunes of the war. He defeated the Turks at Choczim (11 Nov., 1673) and Leopold. Elected king by popular acclamation on the death of Michael (1674), he carried on the war and, by the Treaty of Zurawno (Oct. 1676), retained two-thirds of

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the disputed territory. Seven days later Achmet Kiuprili died, and with him the true glory of the Kiuprili family came to an end. His brother-in-law, Kara Mustapha, who became Grand Vizier, equalled his predecessors in ambition, but had none of the other qualities which had been the secret of their success. He abandoned their simplicity of life, and rivalled the Sultan in magnificence ; he extorted money from foreign envoys as a price of concessions, which he did not carry out ; he treated the Turks themselves no better than the Christians, and reintroduced the system of corruption and bribery in the administration, which his predecessors had tried to eradicate. Nevertheless, the spirit which had been aroused was not yet dead, and the condition of Austrian Hungary gave him his opportunity.

Here the Emperor Leopold had taken advantage of the peace with the Turk to restore order and to persecute the Protestants. When this repressive policy led to a conspiracy, severer measures were adopted (1670-1671). The office of Palatine, or Viceroy, was suppressed ; the country, governed by Austrian officials, was treated like a conquered province ; the Magyar language was discouraged, and soldiers quartered on the inhabitants. At other times this policy, though cruel, might have succeeded, but it was certain to be deeply resented by the proud Magyar nobles, and no sooner was the Emperor engaged in the Dutch war than they revolted under Emeric Tököli who, by the inscription on his coins, proclaimed Louis XIV as the ' Protector of Hungary '. Louis, however, was unable to send the rebels direct assistance, and failed to induce Poland to do so, while Turkey, occupied with the Russian war, could give them no help. In 1681 Leopold, dismayed at the serious character of the revolt, and anxious to free his hands to oppose Louis XIV, offered certain concessions, which conciliated many. But Tököli, having now married the widow of Francis Rakoczy, hoped to use the influence and wealth of the family to gain Transylvania for himself, and sought the definite alliance of the Turks.

Kara Mustapha, now free from the Russian war, at once

listened to his appeal. Entering Austrian Hungary at the head of an enormous army, he declared it tributary to the Porte, crossed the Danube in the spring of 1683, and in

**SIEGE OF VIENNA, JULY-SEPT. 1683** July encamped before the walls of Vienna itself. The Emperor fled to Passau, and no Power seemed likely to save the capital from her doom.

The attention of Germany was distracted by Louis XIV's aggressions in Alsace; in Russia the Regent Sophia had been forced by the state of affairs at home to make peace with the Sultan; Venice was exhausted by her late war; Spain was in no condition to come to the rescue of the Cross; while Louis XIV was not sorry to see the Emperor humbled, for the time at least. But the greatness of the danger had for once roused the Empire. Urged on by the Pope, Innocent XI, who sent large sums of money to the Emperor, Southern Germany produced 20,000 troops, who were joined by 10,000 Saxons and a small contingent from Hanover. By the end of August these troops had reinforced the Austrian field-army under Duke Charles of Lorraine, which was trying to impede the Turkish siege operations. Help was also forthcoming from a quite unexpected quarter. Among others to whom the Pope had appealed was John Sobieski, now King of Poland, who, though he had no reason to be pleased with the Emperor, realized that if Vienna fell the turn of Poland might come next. He had accordingly promised help in March, and was now hurrying on his preparations at Cracow. Yet Cracow was a long distance from Vienna, and, had the Vizier shown the energy of Mahomed or of Achmet, and ordered the city to be stormed, it would probably have fallen before succour could have arrived. His presumption, however, and his cupidity were to be his ruin. He believed that the terror of his name would force the city to capitulate, and hoped by a capitulation to win the chief booty for himself instead of sharing it with his soldiers.

**RELIEF OF VIENNA, 12 SEPT., 1683** Vienna, moreover, found a gallant defender in Rüdiger von Stahremburg and held out splendidly, until, early in September, when the city was at its last gasp, the united forces of the Empire and the Poles came to its relief. On 12 September a desperately con-

tested battle, the brunt of which fell on the German troops, ended in the complete defeat of the Turks, who fled in great disorder, leaving their camp, which had been most luxuriously fitted up, in the hands of their victors. Following them up vigorously, the victors had cleared most of Austria-Hungary before winter stopped further operations.

The relief of Vienna was a real turning-point in the history of South-Eastern Europe. The rout of the Turks, when they seemed to have the Emperor's capital at their mercy, made an enormous impression and started them on a backward move which was to end in 1699 with their expulsion from nearly all Hungary. John Sobieski's share in the suc-

cess, if commonly overstated, since his light armed Polish horsemen had contributed little to the actual winning of the victory, is, for all that, a notable feature, and if quarrels over spoils soon led to his withdrawal from active co-operation with the Emperor, in 1684 Leopold succeeded in gaining the alliance of Venice and the support of the Pope in a Holy League against the Moslem. Fortunately for the Holy League, the Ottoman Power was fast sliding back into its old ways. At the command of the indignant Sultan, Kara Mustapha had paid with his life the penalty of failure, and the Viziers who rose to power were incapable. The Sultan Mahomed was deposed and the two who succeeded him only reigned four years apiece. Under these circumstances the Christian successes continued.

In 1686, Buda, the capital of Turkish Hungary, fell, and Tököli was driven into Transylvania. In August 1687 the Turks were again defeated at Mohacs, on the Danube, the scene of one of their greatest victories in the sixteenth century.

BATTLE OF  
MOHACS,  
12 AUGUST, 1687

Meanwhile, in the south, the Venetians reconquered the Morea, and occupied Corinth and Athens, destroying, to their shame, a large part of the Parthenon in their attack.

VENICE  
CONQUERS  
THE MOREA,  
1687

In January of the following year (1688), the Hungarian 'Estates' or Assembly, cowed by a reign of terror, declared the crown of Hungary hereditary in the Habsburg family,

abolished the old coronation oath, and did away with the right of insurrection hitherto enjoyed by the nobles. In May of the same year, the Hungarian patriot Tököli submitted and acknowledged the Austrian suzerainty over Transylvania.

AUSTRIAN  
SUCCESSSES IN  
HUNGARY, 1688

The successes of the Austrians did not stop here. In September, Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, was occupied, the Danube was crossed, and Serbia and Bosnia overrun. Even to the east of the Carpathians, the Hospodar, or Viceroy of Wallachia, hitherto the vassal of the Sultan, rebelled, and Peter the Great of Russia, began to advance on the Sea of Azof, eventually capturing Azof itself in 1697.

PETER TAKES  
AZOF, 1697

Meanwhile in Poland itself conditions had not improved ; the Polish nobles could fight the enemy indeed, but they loved anarchy at home. Nor had their King the qualities necessary for the task of ruling so turbulent a people. With all his chivalry and valour he was a true Pole of his day and had no statesmanlike gifts. He had little stability of character, and allowed himself to be influenced by a frivolous and selfish wife. The royal authority, therefore, declined during his last years, and the period which followed after his death in 1696 is one of the most disastrous in the history of his unfortunate country, which, like the Ottoman Empire itself, was threatened with internal dissolution.

The year 1689, indeed, witnessed a slight reaction in favour of the Crescent. The Emperor Leopold was engaged in the War of the League of Augsburg, and the strain of the double war on east and west was more than Austria could easily support. Mustapha Kiuprili, the brother of Achmet, who was called ' the Virtuous ', was appointed Vizier, and actually recovered Belgrade (Oct. 1690) and re-entered Hungary. In 1691, however, he was defeated by Louis of Baden at Szalankemen on the River Drave and killed.

BATTLE OF  
SZALANKEMEN,  
AUG. 1691

Little advantage could, however, be gained from this victory, and the Sultan Mustapha II, who succeeded in 1695, actually took the field with some success.



## 94 THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

Eventually in 1697, Prince Eugene won the first of his great Turkish victories at the Battle of Zenta, the Turkish army being virtually annihilated.

BATTLE OF  
ZENTA, 11 SEPT.,  
1697

The Turks had now no alternative but to submit, and in January 1699 the Peace of Carlowitz closed this desperate struggle for the time being. By it—

PEACE OF  
CARLOWITZ,  
JAN. 1699

1. Austria retained all Hungary and Transylvania except the Banat, or district of Temesvar, on the Lower Theiss.
2. To Venice was ceded the Morea and most of the Dalmatian coast.
3. Peter secured Azof (though he was to lose it again in 1711).
4. Poland recovered Podolia (i.e., the country between the Bug and the Dniester), and the Western Ukraine.

The Peace of Carlowitz was one of the greatest achievements of the Habsburgs. Hampered as they were by the demands of the war in the West, they had nevertheless won back nearly all Hungary, and had inflicted on the Turks a series of defeats which heralded the final decline of the Ottoman Empire. Henceforth it no longer seriously threatened Western Europe. It may well be doubted whether the revival started by the Kiuprilis could have lasted, even if their policy had been continued. The ills were too deep-seated. The Turks had come into Europe as conquerors, and could still fight well, but they knew not how to administer a country or to develop its resources. The government of their European conquests, with their religious and racial antagonisms, was no easy matter. The Sultans were often the victims of the intrigues of the Janissaries, of the palace, and of the harem, and were sunk in indolence and vice; while the taxes, necessary to support them in their extravagance, were levied by unjust and unequal methods. The custom of polygamy among the ruling classes destroyed family life, and led to the infusion of foreign blood. The officials, often only half-Turkish, were hopelessly corrupt; and, if the lower classes, saved from the corruption of the harem because they could not afford to keep more than one wife, have to this day preserved their nation-

DECLINE OF  
THE OTTOMAN  
POWER

ality and their pristine honesty and trustworthiness, they have never succeeded in trade. This fell into the hands of foreigners, chiefly Greeks, who, with their independence, had lost all sense of honour. Finally, the influence of the Koran checked natural development and prevented radical reform. Believing it to be not only a creed but a code, which gives Divine sanction to the existing government, the orthodox Moslem of those days looked upon all attempts to alter this government as a treason. Over 200 years were to elapse before any real change in the Turkish State could be accomplished.

From this moment, therefore, the Turk became the sick man of Southern Europe, as was Poland in the North, and the question of the future is as to the date of his final decease or, at the least, as to the disposal of his effects in Europe. In a word, what is termed 'The Eastern Question' has begun.

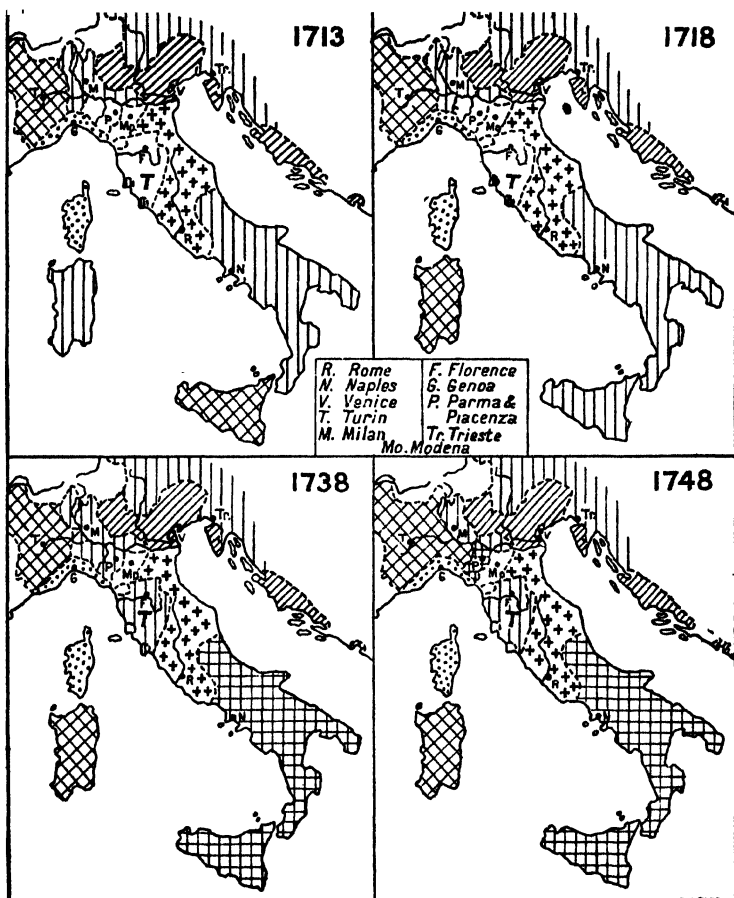
## CHAPTER VI

### THE TRIPLE AND QUADRUPLE ALLIANCE—THE TREATY OF HANOVER—THE WAR OF THE POLISH SUCCESSION—HOME POLICY OF THE REGENT ORLEANS

IT could scarcely be expected that the Peace of Utrecht would long secure tranquillity. It had attempted to remodel the map of Europe, but in so doing it had failed to reconcile two at least of the late combatants. The Emperor Charles VI looked upon his acquisitions in the Netherlands and in Italy as poor compensations for the crown of Spain, which he had hoped to unite with his possessions in Germany, more especially as the value of the Netherlands was impaired by the closing of the Scheldt, and by the irksome stipulations with regard to the Barrier towns.

Thwarted in his endeavours to free himself from these restrictions by the opposition of England and Holland, he refused to abandon his claim to the throne of Spain, and intrigued to exchange Sardinia for Sicily, which had been granted to the Duke of Savoy.

The discontent in Spain at the dismemberment of her ancient dominion was even more intense, the loss of Minorca and Gibraltar was bitterly resented, every effort was made to restrict as rigidly as possible the commercial concessions which England had extorted in the Spanish West Indies, and a powerful party hoped to recover the lost lands in Italy. Philip V himself still clung to the hope of exchanging the crown of Spain for that of France in the event of the death of the young and sickly Louis XV, but, after his marriage to his second wife, Elizabeth Farnese, he fell completely under



Austria ..... Venice ..... N.B. Italy remained unchanged  
 Savoy ..... Genoa .....   
 Spanish Bourbons Papal States   
 T. Tuscany

from 1748 to the outbreak  
 of the Revolutionary War  
 except that Corsica went  
 to France 1768.

the sway of her domineering personality and of the influence of her confidential adviser Cardinal Alberoni, the Minister of Parma at Madrid. This remarkable man, son of a market gardener of Piacenza, had set his heart on ousting the Austrians from Italy, and hoped to achieve his aims by raising Spain once more into the position of a great Power, and using her to undo the Utrecht settlement.

Alberoni was, however, too shrewd a statesman to desire war at once. He realized the weakness of Spain and wished to begin with internal reforms, while he sought to win the support of England by the offer of increased commercial privileges.

His views coincided with the dynastic aspirations of Elizabeth Farnese. This masterful woman, who has not inaptly been named 'The Termagant', had been recommended by Alberoni as 'a good healthy girl, accustomed to hear of nothing but needlework and embroidery'. It was not long before she showed that she was made of different stuff, and for years she was the real ruler of Spain. As her uncle and stepfather, Francis, who ruled in Parma and Piacenza, had no sons, she hoped to acquire these possessions for Don Carlos, her infant son by Philip of Spain, who, as her husband had elder sons by his first wife, had little prospect of succeeding to the crown of Spain.

Aware that these conflicting aims of Austria and of Spain were likely soon to clash, England and France had already drawn together. Both were interested in maintaining the peace of Europe; both had dynastic interests to serve.

The Jacobite insurrection of 1715 had been hatched in France, and though it had failed, George I of England was anxious to buy off French assistance from any further attempt on behalf of the Pretender. Moreover, as Elector of Hanover, he feared the designs of Peter the Great on Mecklenburg, and those of Sweden on Bremen and Verden, which he had gained from her in 1719 (cf. p. 80), while the English were interested in resisting the claim of Sweden to close the Sound to foreign

ships. The best way to secure these ends lay in an alliance with France, more especially as Peter was at this moment bidding for her friendship. In France the Duke of Orleans, who held the Regency during the minority of Louis XV (1715-1723), was hoping to succeed to the throne on the death of the young King, an event which was confidently expected shortly, and realized that England would be inclined to support his claim against that which Philip of Spain was certain to advance.

These were the chief causes of the alliance which the English Minister, Stanhope, and the Abbé Dubois, the French envoy, concluded in November 1716, to which the adhesion of Holland was secured in the following January. England had, before this in May 1716 concluded a treaty with the Emperor at Westminster, guaranteeing mutually not only all the existing possessions of the two countries, but also those 'to be acquired by mutual consent'. Meanwhile Austria was negotiating with the Duke of Savoy for the exchange of Sardinia for Sicily, when the seizure of the Spanish Grand Inquisitor by the Austrians at Milan provoked Philip V into war.

The Emperor had his hands full at the moment with a Turkish war in which he had become involved through his alliance with Venice, whose possessions in the Morea and Dalmatia the Turks had attacked in 1716. Moreover, from want of a fleet, he could not prevent the Spanish fleet from landing troops in Sardinia (August 1717), who soon became masters of the island. This success they followed up in July of the next year by invading and overrunning Sicily. This compelled the Emperor to accede to the settlement proposed by England and France (September 1718) and their intervention proved decisive. It was in vain that Alberoni attempted to stir up trouble for his enemies. True, he succeeded in reconciling Peter the Great and Charles XII, and induced them to join with him in supporting a fresh Jacobite conspiracy in England. In France he hatched a plot to overthrow the Regent, while he incited the Hungarians to fresh efforts against the Emperor, but these schemes met with but scanty success. In Decem-

THE TRIPLE  
ALLIANCE,  
JAN. 1717

SPAIN DECLARES  
WAR

ber the death of Charles XII at Friederickshall in Norway ended the temporary alliance between Sweden and Russia. The Jacobite conspiracy in England, and that in France, were easily suppressed. In August 1718 his fleet was completely defeated by the English Admiral Byng off Cape Passaro in Sicily. The communications of the troops in Sicily with Spain were thus severed. Meanwhile, the Emperor, sacrificing a promising chance in the Balkans to further his Italian projects, had concluded peace with the Turks at Passarowitz (July 1718) and thus had troops available for the recovery of Sicily.

In January 1719 France declared war, and an army invaded the North of Spain, supported by an English fleet. Philip THE QUADRUPLE ALLIANCE now realized the uselessness of further resistance. Alberoni was dismissed and Spain acceded to the terms dictated by the Quadruple Alliance.

TREATY OF LONDON, 1720 By the Treaty of London (1720)—

1. Charles VI exchanged Sardinia for Sicily, the Duke of Savoy being satisfied by his acknowledgment as King of Sardinia.
2. Don Carlos was recognized as heir to the Duchies of Parma and Piacenza.

Shortly after, Philip V was conciliated by the betrothal of his infant daughter to Louis XV.

The interest of the complications we have briefly sketched lies more especially in the novel alliance between England and France, an alliance due partly to personal motives, but which had also sound political grounds and had succeeded in giving peace to Western Europe, and in the rearrangement of the map of Italy. Here Austria had gained by joining Sicily to Naples, while the ambitions of Elizabeth 'the Termagant' had been partly realized.

The foreign policy of Dubois, the able though unscrupulous Minister of the Regent, had been successful. The same praise can scarcely be awarded to his policy at home.

HOME POLICY OF THE REGENT Here the efforts of the Regent Philip of Orleans had been directed to the following objects :

(1) To substitute for the autocratic rule of Louis XIV, based on a bureaucracy of the middle class, a system of government by councils, which might in some measure mitigate the excessive centralization, and recall the nobility to a share in the administration.

✓(2) To adopt a more tolerant policy towards the Jansenists.

✓(3) To check the financial corruption, which had increased during the later years of Louis XIV, and to do something to meet the heavy debts incurred by the prodigal expenditure of the late reign.

In none of these endeavours did the Regent succeed. France had been too long accustomed to the centralized government of a bureaucracy to appreciate the division of power among seven councils. The members quarrelled with one another on questions of precedence. The nobles proved themselves incapable, and displayed their aristocratic insolence by contemptuous treatment of the middle-class lawyers, who alone had the necessary knowledge. The Duke of St. Simon gives us an amusing confession of his own incapacity to serve in the Council of Finance, saying that he could not manage his own finances, and was ignorant of arithmetic.

In less than three years, the councils were suppressed, and the old system restored.

Nor was the ecclesiastical policy of the Regent more successful. It only aroused the jealousy of the Jesuits, and the flame of religious bigotry burst out afresh.

The Regent had no consistency of purpose and no pith. The attempt was soon abandoned, and the Jesuits continued their persecutions.

Meanwhile the endeavours to restore the public credit led to one of the most startling crises in the history of French finance. The Council of Finance had resorted to the usual practices of French financiers. They had lowered the rate of interest on the national debt, they had debased the coinage, and they had endeavoured to put an end to the peculations of the farmers-general. The last ended, as in the reign of Louis XIV, in the punishment of a few, and the escape of the more powerful; the first



amounted to partial repudiation ; and the second, if it helped the exchequer, raised the price of commodities. The Regent now (1716) turned his ear to the attractive suggestions of a Scotchman, John Law, who promised, if he were given a free hand, not only to wipe out the public debt, but to open out a glorious future.

LAW AND THE  
MISSISSIPPI  
SCHEME

The basis of Law's system was founded on the theory which sounds familiar enough to-day, that ' trade depends on money ' and that a plentiful currency—or, as we should now call it, ' inflation '—was essential to promote prosperity. Gold and silver being limited in quantity, Law proposed to issue an incontrovertible paper currency backed by the credit of the Crown, and to establish a State Bank with control over specie in the country and power to issue paper money as required by commerce and industry. Further, a great company was to be formed which should control all the foreign commerce of France, and enjoy all the financial and commercial privileges granted to other bodies or individuals, to co-operate and be virtually identical with the State Bank. It was to make a profit from coining and from the issue of paper money, and from the taxes, and, in addition, to start a vast trading and colonial enterprise, and thus acquire for itself the profits which had hitherto been gained by individuals. The company was to lend the Government the sum of 150,000,000 francs. For this it was to receive 3 per cent. from the Government, instead of the 4 per cent. which had hitherto been paid. The shares of this company were to be offered in the first instance to the public creditors in the exchange for their claims on the Government. In this way the public debt would be absorbed in the shares of the company, and both the State and its creditors would benefit ; the State, because it was to pay 3 per cent. instead of 4 per cent. on its debt ; the creditors, because instead of a beggarly 4 per cent., they would receive good dividends on their shares.

The project at first met with brilliant success. The Bank was founded in May 1716, and so quickly proved its utility that in 1717 its notes were accepted in payment of taxes. In 1717 was established the Company of the West or Missis-

issippi Company, to which the Colony of Louisiana and the great basin of the Mississippi were granted with sovereign rights. The other trading companies like those of Senegal and the French East India Company were incorporated into it; various monopolies, as, for instance, that of the tobacco trade, were granted to it, and in return for further loans to the State it was given the right to coin money, to issue bank-notes, and to farm the taxes.

The shares, which were of the nominal value of 500 francs, were first issued below par; that is, they could be bought at less than their nominal value, and some holders of the national debt hastened to exchange their claims for shares. Those that delayed till the market value of the shares rose did not effect the exchange on such favourable terms. As this transaction did not provide sufficient working capital to start the concern, new shares were created and offered for general subscription, but as the market value had risen the shares were now only to be obtained for 1,000 francs, or double the original price. Nevertheless, the prospects of the company, which had been loudly advertised, were now considered so good that they were eagerly subscribed for. A mad fit of speculation ensued. The shares rose by leaps and bounds until at last, at the close of the year 1719, a 500-franc share could be sold for 15,000 francs, that is, thirty times its nominal value. Fortunes were made in a few days, sometimes in a few hours, while the reckless issue of paper notes made money very cheap. The company paid a dividend of 12 per cent., and promised 40 per cent. in the future. Law's wildest dreams seemed likely to be fulfilled.

It was not, however, long before a reaction set in. The price at which the shares stood was not based on the earnings from the business of the company, which had not yet been properly set going, and people began to ask whence the dividends were to be derived, and saw further that even a 40 per cent. dividend would only give a return of 2 per cent. on the market value of the shares. At once the price of the shares began to fall, and a panic soon ensued.

At the same time the bank-notes became depreciated, as inevitably happens when there is an over-issue, that is, when

more notes are issued than there is gold or silver in the hands of the issuers to represent them. Law was now face to face with a double difficulty, how to keep up the market price of the shares, and how to prevent the further depreciation of the bank-notes. Desperate measures were resorted to (February-March 1720). The Bank and the Company were amalgamated. The bank-notes were declared to be inconvertible, that is to say, the Bank would no longer give gold and silver coins for them. He then proscribed the use of gold and silver coins, and finally forbade the use of the precious metals for other purposes, for jewellery and the like ; he hoped in this way to destroy their value and keep up the value of the bank-notes. But you cannot make people believe by legislation that paper money, which can be no longer exchanged for gold and silver, is of the same value as the precious metals themselves, at least for this reason, that gold and silver can be exported ; while the foreigner will not take an inconvertible paper currency, unless the credit of the issuer is good.

He then tried to fix the price of the shares, and offered to exchange them for bank-notes. But as both still continued to fall this was of no avail. Both holders of shares and of bank-notes were now threatened with ruin, and fortunes were lost as quickly as they had been made. Public indignation ran so high that it was necessary to put an end to the whole scheme. At first an endeavour was made to redeem the 10-franc bank-notes, but the rush was so great that many people were crushed by the crowd, and the Bank, unable to find money enough, was obliged to stop cash payment. All holders of notes or of shares were then ordered to present them with an account of how they had been acquired (July 1720). Those who were discovered to have earned them during the period of speculation, had their amounts reduced, besides being fined in proportion to their gains. The nobles, however, as usual, escaped. The shares which were held by the King, or which the Company had bought back in the days of depression, were destroyed. By this means the number of the bank-notes was reduced to 1,700,000,000 francs, and the shares to 56,000.

The holders of bank-notes received government securities,

'rentes' at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., in proportion to the amount of their holding. The shares were returned to the owners. The Bank was closed in October 1720; but the Company, though with privileges reduced, and with a restricted business, continued to do a fair trade until 1769, when, owing to the decline of the colonial empire, it was dissolved.

The Mississippi Scheme has many points of similarity with the South Sea Bubble in England, which occurred at the same time. Its failure was due chiefly to two causes—the wild speculation which had raised the price of shares far beyond their proper value, a speculation which the Government at first encouraged; and the reckless issue of paper money without adequate security. Its results were most unfortunate. The interest, indeed, on the national debt was reduced from 4 per cent. to  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ; but this was only effected by what amounted to partial repudiation, and the capital amount of the debt was positively increased by 20,000,000 francs.

Meanwhile, if a few were enriched, thousands were ruined. St. Simon tells us that the distress was so great that he wonders there was no popular rising. He does not, however, remind us that the way in which nobles had escaped at the final settlement was one cause of the discontent. Some useful lessons were taught as to the true nature of credit, and trade, and especially the colonial trade, received an impulse which did not end with the crisis. Even that, however, was accompanied by an increase in the spirit of gambling and a lowering of commercial morality.

But perhaps the most significant result is to be sought for in the growing unpopularity of the Regent and of the Government, which expressed itself not only in epigrams and lampoons, but even in more serious works. Thus Montesquieu, in his *Persian Letters* (1721), made a severe, though covert, attack on the absolute government of France; while Voltaire, in his tragedy of *Oedipus* (1718), was believed to allude to the vices of the Regent. The easy-going Regent was himself a patron of literature, and was too indolent to intervene. All this serves to remind us that the age of Louis XIV had passed away. The revival of criticism of

the Government may also partly be accounted for by the influence of English ideas and writings, which was an outcome of the late alliance. Now for the first time Frenchmen began to study English, and to visit England, and learnt in that country the advantages of a freer government and of greater personal liberty.

This cult of England and her institutions and general outlook upon life grew steadily under the ministries of the Duke of Bourbon and especially of Cardinal Fleury (1726–1743). Thus Voltaire, at this period the lion of the fashionable ‘salons’ of Paris, which began under the Regency to be a real political force, was for ever talking of his stay in England (1726–1729) and of his good friends Mr. Locke and Sir Isaac Newton. His *Discours sur l'homme* was modelled on Pope's famous *Essay on Man* and his plays of this date are cast in the heroic mould of Shakespeare, Addison and Dryden. In his *Lettres Philosophiques*, publicly burnt by royal edict in 1734, the state of English and French society are contrasted, to the great advantage of the former. England is set up to admiration as the country of religious toleration, ‘The Englishman may go to Heaven by whatever road he chooses’; and of equality; nobles and priests have to pay taxes in England like every one else; the peasant eats white bread, is well clothed, and can raise as many head of cattle as he can afford; the leaders of commerce are admitted into highest society; and may even become ambassadors. Students of English social history will be aware that all this was a little overdone, as the cynical Walpole himself recognized, when he declared that, while we might be duped by French foreign policy, the French were more foolish still to be duped by our supposed virtues. Allowance must, however, be made for literary hyperbole. Montesquieu, who also visited England, was less flattering. ‘Money in this country’, he wrote, ‘is esteemed above all else, honour and virtue but little.’ Nevertheless, Montesquieu was also a great admirer of our institutions, and, in his famous volume on *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748), is loud in his praises of the English Constitution. And the Abbé Prevost, the celebrated author of *Manon Lescaut* (1731), besides being

the translator of *Pamela* and the other novels by Richardson, which became the rage in Paris, devotes the greater part of his other works, *Memoirs and Adventures of a Man of Quality*, etc., to descriptions of the glories of England, of London and her coffee-houses, 'the headquarters of English liberty', and even of her pugilists!

The Regency only lasted two years longer. In February 1723, the young King reached his fourteenth year, and was considered to be of age. This, indeed, made little difference to the Government; but in December the Regent died a victim to his excesses, and the Duke of Bourbon, a descendant of the 'Great' Condé, became chief minister. St. Simon tells us that foreign nations regretted Orleans more than the French did. In other words, his foreign policy, directed as it was by the Abbé Dubois, was on the whole successful. The same cannot be said of his home policy. The Duke was a man of quick wit; of wide, if desultory, reading. He dabbled in music, in painting, in science. He was broad-minded, and wished to promote the public welfare. But all these gifts were marred by superficiality and by utter want of character. He loved half-measures, and lacked courage, decision and persistency. The reforms he inaugurated were lightly abandoned; they therefore served only to weaken the centralized government left by Louis XIV, and to excite criticism. His private life was not only infamous, but it was not even veiled by an outward show of decency, and his example was followed by the court and by society. 'Vice', it has been said, 'no longer paid virtue the homage of hypocrisy', and 'for shallowness and levity, concealed by literary artifice and play of frivolous wit, the regency has never been surpassed'. But it at least can be said for the Regent that he did not allow his mistresses to play the part in politics which they did in the reign which was now to follow.

The arrangements made by the Treaty of London in 1720 (cf. p. 100) were not likely to endure. They neither satisfied the Emperor nor Spain. Philip of Spain desired to recover Gibraltar from England, while Elizabeth Farnese was not content with

DEATH OF  
THE REGENT,  
DEC. 1723

FIRST TREATY  
OF VIENNA AND  
THE LEAGUE OF  
HANOVER, 1725

the mere promise of the succession of her son, Don Carlos, to the Italian duchies of Parma, Piacenza and Tuscany. Moreover, the friendly relations established by the Regent between France and Spain through the betrothal of the Infanta to Louis XV in 1722, were at this moment rudely shaken by the policy of the Duke of Bourbon, now Minister in France. Anxious to secure a wife of maturer age for the King, and therefore likely sooner to bear an heir to the French crown—the Infanta was then barely eight years old—he sent her back to Spain, and found a new bride in Maria, the daughter of Stanislas Leszczinski, ex-King of Poland.

Meanwhile, the Emperor, who was eager to advance the commercial interests of the Austrian Netherlands and to establish trading settlements in India, had just formed an East India Company at Ostend. He was also intent on securing the recognition of the so-called 'Pragmatic Sanction' by the European Powers, that is to say, the acknowledgment of the right of his daughter Maria Theresa to succeed to his dominions, contrary to the provision made by his brother Joseph I by which that monarch's daughters were to take precedence of those of Charles should the latter leave no male heir. As none of the members of the Triple Alliance—England, Holland and France—would support either of these schemes, and as England and Holland were violently opposed to the Ostend Company, threatening, as it did, their commercial interests, he turned a ready ear to the suggestions of Ripperda, a Netherlander of Spanish origin.

Why, Ripperda urged, should not Spain and the Emperor come to terms with regard to Italy, and unite to gain their respective ends elsewhere?

On this basis, the courts of Spain and Vienna signed the Treaty of Vienna in April 1725. The news of this astounding alliance at once aroused the fears of England and France, who accordingly, in September, formed the counter League of Hanover with Prussia, which was subsequently joined by Holland, Sweden and Denmark.

This was answered by a still more startling agreement between Spain and Austria in the Secret Treaty of Vienna (November 1725), by which—

✓1. Philip of Spain guaranteed the Ostend Company, and promised to transfer to it the commercial privileges hitherto enjoyed by England and Holland.

✓2. The Emperor promised to try and regain Gibraltar and Minorca for Spain.

✓3. The hand of Maria Theresa, the Emperor's eldest daughter, was to be given to Don Carlos, the eldest son of Elizabeth Farnese, and with it the succession to all the Habsburg dominions outside Italy.

✓4. Don Philip, Elizabeth's second son, should marry the Emperor's second daughter, and hold the Austrian possessions in Italy, as well as the reversion to the Italian Duchies.

✓5. The claim of the Stuarts to the English throne should again be supported, and France be forced to surrender Alsace to the Emperor, and Cerdagne, Roussillon and Lower Navarre to Spain.

By this treaty, to which the Elector Palatine and the Electors of Bavaria, Cologne and Treves gave their adhesion, a complete revolution in the diplomatic relations of Europe was caused. The Habsburgs in Austria broke with the maritime Powers, to whose assistance they were mainly indebted for Sicily, and came to terms with the Bourbons of Spain, and, had the idea of Ripperda succeeded, France might have lost Alsace, the most precious conquest of Louis XIV. Nay, it might have happened that by the extinction of the line of Don Carlos and of Don Philip the old possessions of Charles V. would have fallen once more into the same hands.

✓ Moreover, when Frederick William I, bribed by the promise of the Emperor that he should succeed to Julich and Berg on the Rhine on the death of the present holder (Treaty of Wusterhausen, Oct. 1727) withdrew from the ✓League of Hanover, and Catherine I of Russia concluded a treaty with the Emperor (Aug. 1726), success seemed not unlikely. In any case a war which would involve all Europe appeared imminent.

Nevertheless there was little prospect of this magnificent dream being realized. A strong party at Vienna, led by Prince Eugène, warned Charles that the project of this double marriage would, if carried out make Austria a province of Spain, while in Spain itself the old animosity against Austria was still strong and Elizabeth in May 1726 dismissed Ripperda. Fleury, that very considerable statesman, who, at the advanced age of

RIPPERDA  
DISMISSED,  
MAY 1726



seventy-three, succeeded the Duke of Bourbon as first minister in 1726, and was in power till he died at the age of ninety, was convinced that the English alliance was still the best course to pursue, and in 1727 the death of the Tzarina Catherine I altered the policy of Russia. Charles VI, too, was most reluctant to engage in war, and had always been suspicious of the good faith of Elizabeth Farnese; he therefore now began negotiations for peace.

This was virtually the end of the Anglo-Spanish alliance, and, before long, Elizabeth, forced to recognize that Austria would never allow the marriages to take place, reverted to the scheme of securing the Italian duchies for her eldest son, Don Carlos. To achieve this, she was ready to relinquish the idea of regaining Gibraltar, and thereby succeeded in coming to terms with England, France, and Holland (Treaty of Seville, Nov. 1729).

This left the Emperor isolated, but still obdurate over the Italian duchies. War seemed likely, but, eventually, Walpole, by promising to guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction, induced Charles to give way and in July 1731 the second Treaty of Vienna was concluded with England, Holland, and Spain.

By that treaty:

1. The suggested marriages between the courts of Madrid and Vienna were abandoned.
2. Charles VI, in return for a guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction by England and Holland, consented to abolish the Ostend Company, allowed Don Carlos to take possession of Parma and Piacenza, the last Farnese Duke having just died, and acknowledged his right of succession to the Duchy of Tuscany.

Walpole, however, in concluding this treaty without Fleury, had gained a temporary triumph at the expense of the Anglo-French alliance, for Fleury had thus received a rebuff he could not forgive. He was not yet ready for an actual breach with England, but he could contemplate such an event the more readily because the birth of a Dauphin (Sept. 1729) had extinguished the hopes which Philip V had treasured of succeeding to the French throne, and thereby removed the

TREATY OF  
SEVILLE,  
NOV. 1729

SECOND TREATY  
OF VIENNA,  
JULY 1731

MINISTRY OF  
CARDINAL  
FLEURY,  
1726-1743

chief obstacle to Franco-Spanish friendship, and the cornerstone of the Anglo-French alliance. The Emperor, in the vain hope of securing the succession of his daughter, had allowed the Spanish Bourbons to fix their hold on Italy, a hold they were not to relax, and Elizabeth Farnese had gained a great triumph. That restless spirit was not, however, satisfied, and soon the question of the Polish Succession gave her another chance.

The most serious objection to an elective monarchy lies in the danger that each election may involve the country in war. Even in an hereditary kingdom a disputed succession has often led to war, as had been the case in the War of the Spanish Succession, and was again shortly to be the case in that of the Austrian Succession. But where the monarchy is elective the danger is intensified. Every country which has political interests to advance is constantly intriguing during the life of the reigning monarch in support of its future candidate, and is ready to support his claims when the vacancy occurs.

Such had been the fate of Poland ever since the extinction of the Jagellon dynasty at the close of the sixteenth century. In the year 1709, Augustus Frederick, the Elector of Saxony, had been restored to the Polish throne by Peter the Great after the defeat of the Swedish King Charles XII (p. 78), who had set up Stanislaus Leszczinski as his candidate, and now the death of Augustus Frederick (Feb. 1733) attracted the attention of Europe.

Of the candidates for the Polish throne two were the most prominent, Stanislaus Leszczinski, the Polish noble who had already held the crown for a brief period (1704-1709), and Augustus Frederick II, Elector of Saxony, son of the previous King.

The cause of Augustus was supported by Charles VI, the Emperor, and Anna, Tzarina of Russia. The Emperor was influenced in his choice by the promise of the Elector that he would guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction, while Anna thought that she could exercise more influence in Poland under a foreign king than under the rule of a Polish noble, who had once been the candidate of Sweden, and was further

conciliated by the offer of the Duchy of Courland to her favourite, Biren.

The question whether war would be avoided depended on the policy of France. Had she acquiesced in the election of Augustus, or had she remained neutral, as Cardinal Fleury wished, the Poles would not have dared to resist. Louis XV, however, not unnaturally desired to press the claims of his father-in-law, Stanislaus. Stanislaus was the popular candidate in Poland; it had been the aim of France since the days of Louis XIV to use Poland as an ally in the north-east against Austria and Russia; and the military party, headed by Villars, one of Louis XIV's veterans, were eager for a war, which might give them an opportunity of fleshing their swords against their old enemy the Habsburgs. Fleury

ELECTION OF STANISLAUS LESZCZYŃSKI, 21 SEPT., 1733 accordingly was forced to take up the cause of Stanislaus, and by bribing the important Polish nobles had little difficulty in securing his election (21 Sept., 1733). Russia and Austria at once prepared for war, and most of the Princes of the Empire, with the exception of Prussia and the Electors of Bavaria, Cologne and the Palatinate, all three members of the Wittelsbach family, followed suit. France now had to look for allies. Two were soon found. With Philip's claims to the throne of France out of the way, a Franco-Spanish alliance was natural enough. Philip had been irritated by the Emperor's failure to fulfil the promises made in 1725 (cf. p. 109), and Elizabeth Farnese was alarmed at the delay of Charles VI in formally recognizing Don Carlos as Duke of Parma and Piacenza, which were held to be Imperial fiefs. A French alliance, she thought, might strengthen his position, and even offer an opportunity for further acquisitions. Elizabeth, therefore, though with some hesitation, joined the popular cry and declared for the French alliance.

More surprising was the conduct of Charles Emanuel I, the young King of Sardinia. It is here that this astute person began that clever, though critical policy which he pursued with such success until the close of the War of the Austrian Succession, a policy dictated by the geographical

POLICY OF CHARLES EMANUEL, KING OF SARDINIA

position of his country. Geography, it has been cynically said, did not allow him to be honest. A glance at the map (p. 5) will show that Piedmont, with its capital Turin, and Savoy on the other side of the Alps, command the two great passes from France into Italy, that of the Mont Cenis and the Mont St. Genèvre, while on its eastern side Piedmont marches with the Duchy of Milan, then in the hands of Austria. In any struggle, therefore, between France and the Habsburgs, it was difficult to maintain neutrality, and easy to play off one Power against another. With this aim in view, Charles Emanuel determined to accept the tempting offers of the French.

By the League of Turin, France and Sardinia agreed to assist each other in driving the Habsburgs from Italy. Of the LEAGUE OF TURIN, 26 SEPT., 1733 Austrian possessions, Don Carlos was to have Naples and Sicily and to hand over the Duchies of Parma and Piacenza, the Tuscan ports called 'The Presidii', and the claim to the Duchy of Tuscany to his younger brother, Don Philip. Milan was to belong to the King of Sardinia, and in return he was to cede Savoy to France.<sup>1</sup>

In November, a closer secret compact was concluded between France and Spain. The first of the three 'Family Treaties of the Escorial (First Family Compact)', the object of which was to push the interests of the Bourbons. By this treaty the TREATY OF THE ESCURIAL (FIRST FAMILY COMPACT), NOV. 1733 quarrel between the two Bourbon courts of France and Spain, which had lasted since the Peace of Utrecht, was finally ended; and henceforth, if not always active allies, they never fought each other again.

Of the remaining Powers, the interests of Sweden, Turkey and Prussia were involved. Sweden and Turkey wished to oppose the advance of Russia; for Sweden might hope to recover some of her lost possessions on the eastern coast of the Baltic, and the Porte feared the increase of Russian influence in Poland, which marched with her territories on the lower Dnieper; the King of Prussia was jealous of the continued rule of NEUTRALITY OF SWEDEN, TURKEY, PRUSSIA

<sup>1</sup> Philip mistrusted the Treaty because Mantua was not mentioned and because Charles Emanuel had been given supreme command: a compromise was found in the appointment of Villars, whereon Philip, though protesting against the Treaty, took part in the war.

Saxony in Poland. None of these three Powers, however, took any part in the war. Sweden, torn by the factions of her nobles, who were divided into the parties of the 'Hats' and the 'Caps', was in no position to move, while the 'Hats' were in the pay of France. Frederick William I, the cautious King of Prussia, was unwilling to risk his well-drilled army on the battlefield; he sent a contingent to the Imperial army, but took no further part, while Turkey, which would not stir unless Fleury would guarantee her against any loss, was shortly called off by the attack of Nadir Shah of Persia, who was incited thereto by Russia.

In England, the Opposition clamoured for war in support of the Emperor. The alliance with France, due chiefly to PEACE POLICY OF WALPOLE the personal and dynastic interests of the Hanoverian Kings and the Regent, had been breaking up of late. The Regent was no more, and the admission of Chauvelin to office in 1727 had strengthened the anti-English party in France. Fleury, since his rebuff over the Treaty of Vienna in 1731, had been seeking to isolate England and to estrange her from Spain and from the Emperor. In England also, now that George II was firmly established on the throne, the value of the French alliance had declined, and the prospect of a successful attack on the Emperor by the united Bourbon dynasties was viewed with alarm. Here, then, it was said, was a great opportunity for forming another Grand Alliance like that of William III, of returning to the side of Austria, the true ally of England and of Hanover, and of seizing the moment, when France and Spain were engaged in a European struggle, to settle our colonial and commercial quarrels with those countries. Walpole, however, who since 1730 had become supreme in the councils of George II, resolutely declined to interfere. Poland, he said, was no affair of England. Fleury, moreover, by promising to refrain from attacking the Netherlands, induced the Dutch to conclude a separate treaty of neutrality, thus providing Walpole with an additional motive for keeping the peace. That his policy had much to be said for it at the moment cannot be denied. On the other hand, an

alliance with the Emperor at this juncture might have prevented the outbreak of war. As it was, Austria's losses in this war and in the disastrous Turkish war (1736-1739) into which Charles VI plunged in the vain hope of finding compensation for his Italian losses, left her weak, discredited, and apparently an easy prey to her enemies. By intervention in 1733 Walpole might have prevented the attack on Austria in 1740, or at least improved her chances of warding it off. Moreover, his abstention did not avert, it merely postponed, the now inevitable colonial struggle against Spain and France.

In the war which ensued Austria and Russia had little difficulty in overthrowing Stanislaus and in securing the election of their candidate, the Elector of Saxony. Fleury, after an ineffectual attempt to relieve Danzig at the mouth of the Vistula, where Russian and French swords were crossed for the first time in history, abandoned the Poles to their fate, and devoted himself to the campaigns on the Rhine and in Italy. In 1733, Charles Emanuel took Milan, and in 1734, aided by the French, won two battles, Parma and Guastalla. In the same year Don Carlos seized Naples; and in 1735 he invaded Sicily and was crowned King. Meanwhile the French had occupied Lorraine and were successful on the Rhine.

By this time, however, the aims of the members of the League of Turin began to diverge. Elizabeth, not content with the acquisition of Naples and Sicily by Don Carlos, tried once more to gain for him the hand of Maria Theresa, the Emperor's daughter, and was eager to secure Mantua for Spain. By these designs she at once aroused the fears of Charles Emanuel. He had not concluded his treaty with Spain and was not prepared to see North Italy in the grip of the Bourbons. If Milan and Mantua were to go to Spain, while Don Philip secured Parma and Piacenza as well as the reversion of Tuscany, he would be completely surrounded by the Bourbons of Spain and France, and rather than this he preferred to leave Austria in quiet possession of Milan and Mantua. Accordingly he began to make secret

STANISLAUS  
DEPOSED AND  
THE ELECTOR  
OF SAXONY  
ELECTED KING,  
OCT. 1733

overtures to the Emperor. Fleury, seeing how matters stood, forthwith signed the preliminaries of the third Treaty of Vienna with Charles (Oct. 1735).

THIRD TREATY  
OF VIENNA,  
OCT. 1735-1738

Spain and Charles Emanuel were indignant at being thus left in the lurch, and for some time refused to acquiesce, but they were helpless without the aid of France, and finally in November 1738, they accepted the offers dictated to them and signed the Definitive Treaty.

By that treaty it was agreed that :

1. Francis Stephen, the Duke of Lorraine, should cede that duchy to Stanislaus Leszczinski, the ex-King of Poland, with reversion to France, and receive the Duchy of Tuscany instead on the death of its last Medici Duke ; this occurred in 1737.
2. France should guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction. ✓
3. The Emperor was to have Parma and Piacenza and to retain Milan and Mantua with the exception of the districts of Tortona and Novara, which were to be granted to Charles Emanuel.
4. Don Carlos was to hold the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily. ✓

The war which was thus closed has little importance from a military point of view, and the campaigns were in no way striking. Yet in its character and in its results it was none the less significant. It closed a period of intricate and confused diplomacy, caused by the quarrels arising out of the Peace of Utrecht, more especially with regard to Italy,<sup>1</sup> and vitally affected the future of all the Powers engaged. Austria suffered most. She had indeed placed her candidate on the Polish throne ; she retained Milan and Mantua, and gained Parma and Piacenza, though her tenure of them was brief ; while, after the marriage of Francis Stephen of Lorraine to Maria Theresa, daughter of the Emperor, Tuscany became an Austrian possession. But she had to surrender Naples and Sicily, her prestige had been impaired, and Lorraine was lost to the Empire. It was not till 1768 that Lorraine finally fell to France, but during the life of Stanislaus the

<sup>1</sup> The distribution of Italy remained with one exception, that of Parma and Piacenza, as it was settled by the Treaty of Vienna, till the wars of the French Revolution. In 1748 Austria lost Parma and Piacenza, which were given to Don Philip, son of Elizabeth Farnese.

duchy was practically in her hands. Fleury had thus, not only secured the most important acquisition France was to make between 1685 and 1789, but by negotiating the definitive peace of Vienna, and by successfully isolating England, he had secured for France once more the position of arbiter of Europe, while in 1739 he scored another success by negotiating peace between Turkey and her Austrian and Russian enemies.

Internally, too, France under Fleury had been relatively prosperous, there had been time to recover from the convulsions caused by the experiments of John Law, and revenue was coming in better. This was due partly to the work of the two Controllers-General of the Departments of Trade and Finance respectively. To the first of these, Orry, France owed the very considerable improvements which were effected in the main roads and bridges and in internal communications generally. The roads of France, indeed, remained the best in Europe till the end of the century and excited the admiration of Arthur Young as late as 1783. There was also a notable expansion of the mercantile marine and in the colonial trade, particularly of the French East India Company, the impulse to which had, in fact, been given by Law. More important still were the currency reforms of Des Forts. There had been two constant troubles, the nominal value of the coined money (Louis d'Or and Ecu's) did not correspond to their intrinsic value, that is, to world prices, and the money of account (Livres Tournois) was not coined money at all. The Livre Tournois tended naturally to follow world prices, and the coined money—when its intrinsic value, as expressed in livres, exceeded its nominal value—was in danger of being driven out of circulation and either hoarded or melted down and exported. The result was a continual see-sawing of price levels, both internal and external, which gravely affected the wage-earners and trading conditions generally. Many attempts had been made to adjust the position, but these were too often spoilt by the desire to make an excessive minting profit for the Exchequer—and the Law adventure had added greatly to the confusion. These troubles were finally disposed of by Des Forts' great



edict of 1726 which fixed a new ratio for the coined money (to which the money of account was also firmly linked) in terms of weights of gold and silver respectively. This ratio was so accurately calculated in terms of the then world values of the two metals that it maintained itself unaltered till the Revolution, and was one of the principal causes of the revival of the commercial prosperity of France, who was thus provided once more, for the time being, with the sinews of further war.

Though the condition of the peasants in many districts remained miserable, as also of the urban population in some of the towns—there were, for instance, formidable labour troubles in Lyons in 1744, while in 1740 both the King's and the Cardinal's carriages were held up by mobs of women with shouts of 'Bread, bread'—on the whole a considerable measure of prosperity was beginning to return. This brought with it a notable increase in the amenities of life for those who were fortunate enough to have the means of indulging in them—the landed gentry, the lawyers (or '*noblesse de la robe*'), the higher ranks of the clergy—but excluding the poor parish priest—the rich farmers-general of the taxes, and even, to a certain extent, the rising class of industrial and commercial magnates; for all of these life was delightful enough. Indeed, some assert, with no small measure of truth, that if, being a French gentleman, one could have chosen for oneself the period in which to live, one might have done far worse than select the years about 1740. Indeed, France at this time was still setting a standard for civilized life, and this was followed, in varying degrees, in the other capitals of Europe, as, for instance, at Vienna and at the courts of many of the German Princes, and even under Frederick the Great at Potsdam and Berlin. Apart from the literary and intellectual atmosphere of the '*salons*' referred to on page 106, the works of such contemporary painters as Pater, Lancret and Boucher, of sculptors such as Caffieri and Bouchardon, the whole of the embroideries and '*objets de vertu*' of the style known as '*Louis Quinze*' (the porcelain factories at Sèvres opened a little later under Madame de Pompadour), are evidence to this day of the

prevailing elegance and high degree of taste, less monumental and magnificent and orderly than in the days of Louis XIV, but much more delightful and charming. Even impropriety was intelligent and lively instead of being merely coarse. The theatre under Marivaux took on a lighter vein, while the great Camargo at the Opera dared to show her legs.

The personal success of Elizabeth Farnese during the period closed by the definitive Treaty of Vienna, is hardly less remarkable than the diplomatic triumph of Fleury. At every peace made since the Peace of Utrecht the cause of her children had been advanced, and now at last she had gained for her eldest son the proud position of a kingdom, that of Naples and Sicily. In 1748 her ambition was finally satisfied by the acquisition of Parma and Piacenza for her second son, Don Philip.

The War of the Polish Succession is also of importance in the history of North-Eastern Europe. Poland henceforth practically lost her independence, and was before long to be divided between Russia, Prussia and Austria. Russia in this war, for the first time in history, had sent an army to the Rhine and established her claim to interfere in Western politics.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION

**W**HILE the other Powers of Europe had been engaged in incessant wars, Prussia, under the careful rule of Frederick William I, had been gradually preparing herself for the important part she was henceforth to play. Since his succession in 1713 he had for the most part pursued a policy of neutrality. He had taken part in the struggle between Peter the Great and Charles XII, and had thereby gained part of Western Pomerania, with Stettin and the mouth of the Oder, his most important waterway to the sea. For a moment he had joined the League of Hanover, but had speedily withdrawn (cf. p. 109), and in the war of the Polish succession had, after some hesitation, contented himself with sending his contingent to the Imperial army, which he could not lawfully refuse. His policy has generally been attributed to his ignorance of foreign affairs and to his fears lest war might spoil the symmetry of his well-drilled army and decimate his favourite 'Potsdam Giants'. A more probable reason is to be found in his conviction that Prussia needed to be strengthened and reformed, and for that purpose required peace. In any case it is as a reformer and peaceful administrator that Frederick William I takes his place in the history of his famous house.

To appreciate the value of these reforms we must remember the character of the country over which he ruled. This has already been described in speaking of the Great Elector (cf. p. 68). Here it is only necessary to add that the Duchy of East Prussia had been freed from the supremacy of Poland by the Great Elector; that the Elector Frederick III had been

granted the title of ' King in Prussia ' in 1701, thus becoming the only Protestant King on the Continent ; and that by the Peace of Utrecht Spanish Guelders had been acquired.

Many of the characteristics of the Prussian territories remind one of the possessions of the Habsburgs, but the racial differences were not so great in Prussia, and the German element was stronger. The Prussian State owed its position in Europe to its ruler, and had no ancient memories, as was the case in Austria. Moreover, the Elector King had no shadowy Imperial claims, which in Austria were ever conflicting with the interests of the Archduke ; and while Austria was the slave of the Jesuits, in Protestant Prussia the Church was the servant of the King. These differences, partly at least, explain why the policy to be attempted so unsuccessfully in Austria by Joseph II (cf. Chapter X) met with brilliant results in the case of Prussia.

The Great Elector had already laid down the lines of reform, but the problem still remained for final solution. If Prussia was ever to become a State, this could only be done by establishing a strong central executive under the personal guidance of its ruler. To strengthen the powers of the local assemblies would have meant the perpetuation of baronial tyranny and of national disruption, and if the State was to be strong against its enemies without, it must be based on a large army. Frederick, extravagant and fond of display, had done little beyond winning the royal title. His son, Frederick William I, took up the work with all the energy of a narrow yet powerful mind.

Finding that the financial and military departments were always quarrelling, he united them into one Supreme Directory of War, Finance, and Royal Domains, and made that Directory, though nominally under the Privy Council, the real instrument of civil and military administration under his own direction, while foreign affairs were controlled by an interior council of which he was the head. Having thus established an effective and simple system of government, he next devoted himself to the army. He more than doubled its numbers, and gave Prussia an army

THE REFORMS  
OF FREDERICK  
WILLIAM I

ADMINIS-  
TRATION

of 80,000, nearly as large as that of Austria with her far greater resources.

Half of this army was raised by conscription on a local basis, half was recruited from foreign lands, and the Elector resorted to every device to obtain recruits of fine physique. The proportion of cavalry and of artillery was increased, an elaborate system of drill such as was then unknown was enforced, and the iron ramrod introduced whereby the rapidity of firing was enhanced. To meet the heavy expenses thus involved, he proceeded to abolish the feudal tenure on which his nobles had hitherto held their land, and substituted one uniform

land tax. He carefully administered the royal domains, which were especially large in Prussia. He continued the excise and sought to raise revenue by a rigorous system of customs on all foreign goods, whereby he also hoped, according to the ideas of his day, to develop industries at home.

To the same end foreign artisans were invited and protected; Protestant exiles, who had been driven from Salzburg, were settled in Prussia; marshes were drained, and agriculture fostered and improved.

Although he was unable to ameliorate the position of the serfs throughout the country, since they belonged to the nobles, in his own royal domains in Prussia a system of fixed dues was substituted for the old labour services.

On the question of education, the views of the King were peculiar. He had a contempt for all higher learning, for literature and art, and did nothing to promote them. Education was to be essentially practical, but more than one thousand schools were founded, primary education was made compulsory, and the study of medicine and of the economic and administrative sciences was encouraged.

The same features are seen in his ecclesiastical policy. Theological controversy was to be avoided, and the practical side of religion insisted upon. Uniformity of outward ritual was rigidly enforced, and although Roman Catholics were tolerated, scepticism was not. A Berlin dentist who was suspected of

atheistical views was subjected to an examination conducted by the King himself, and a free-thinking philosopher he threatened to immure.

The system thus established was carried out with remorseless severity. Honest, straightforward, and with a genuine desire to improve his country's welfare, the King was unsympathetic, narrow, coarse and brutal. Strict and parsimonious himself, he expected his subjects to be the same. As he drilled his army, so he drilled his subjects. There is much in all this which is distasteful to an English mind, and yet we may allow that his policy was suited to his people. In any case this

TREATMENT  
OF HIS SON

excuse can hardly apply to his treatment of his son. The young Frederick was by nature fond of literature and music, and hated the practical studies, military, economic and evangelical, upon which his father insisted with rigorous formality. When in his anxiety for a freer life and to see the world, he tried to escape, his father forced him to witness the execution of his tutor, who was suspected of connivance, and subjected him to stricter confinement and still severer discipline. It may be that the young man learnt under this harsh treatment the power of self-restraint, of endurance and self-reliance, but it is certain that it hardened and brutalized him; that it destroyed his generosity and his sense of honour, and helped to make him a cynic who disbelieved in human goodness. Had Frederick's education been different he might have been a far finer

DEATH OF  
FREDERICK  
WILLIAM I.  
ACCESSION OF  
FREDERICK II,  
MAY 1740

character, yet without his father's reforms he would probably never have earned the title of 'The Great'. Frederick William I left to his son a well, if despotically, governed people, a splendid army, and a well-filled treasury, and a few months after his death their value was to be conclusively proved.

On 31 May 1740, Frederick II became King; in October the death of the Emperor, Charles VI, without male heirs, brought forward the double problem as to who should succeed him in his own possessions, and who should be elected Emperor. Throughout his reign of twenty-nine years, the policy of Charles

DEATH OF  
EMPEROR  
CHARLES VI,  
OCT. 1740;  
HIS POLICY

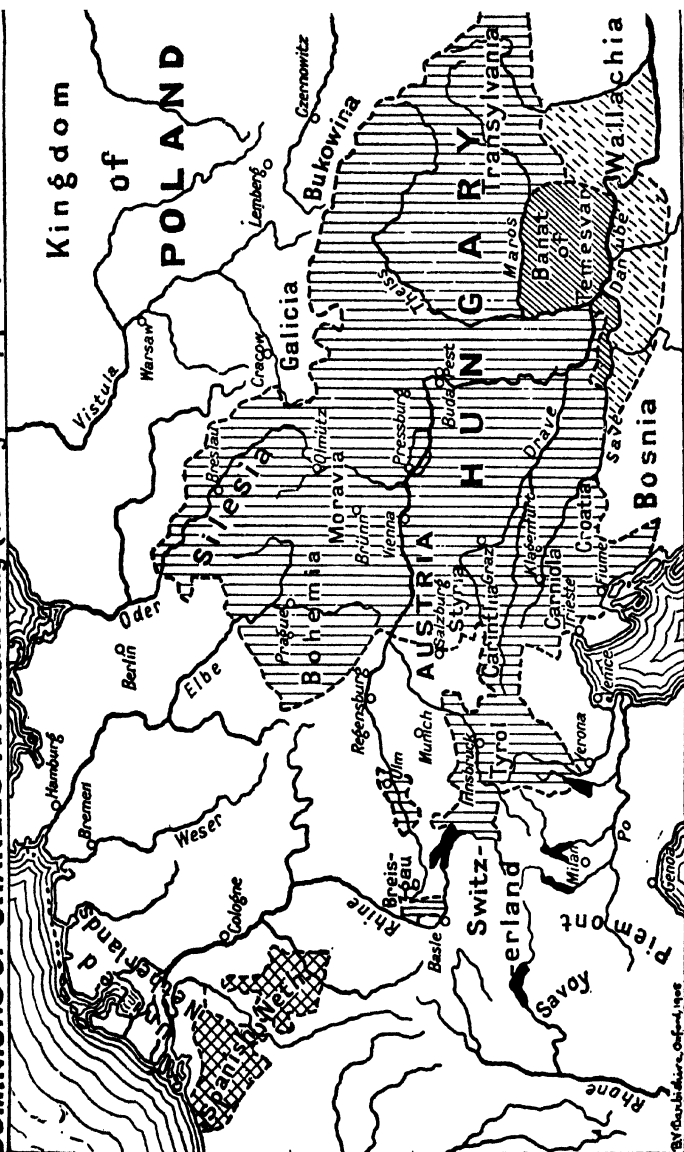
had been devoid of all consistency of purpose. No doubt the position was one of great difficulty. Of his hereditary territories the centre lay at Vienna, divided into *Lower Austria*, round the capital itself; *Inner Austria*, which comprised Styria, Carinthia and Carniola; *Upper Austria*, Tyrol and the Vorarlberg; the Breisgau, near the Black Forest, and the scattered pieces of Austrian Swabia, which were called *Further Austria*. To this nucleus, inhabited by a German-speaking race, were added Bohemia, with its dependencies, Moravia and Silesia, mainly Czech interspersed by a certain admixture of Germans, and Hungary, peopled by the Ruthenes, also of Slav origin, with a Magyar or Tartar nobility.

The Peace of Utrecht had added to these hereditary dominions by the grant of the Austrian Netherlands and of the possessions in Italy, which at Charles' death consisted of the Duchies of Milan, Parma and Piacenza, while by the Treaty of Passarovitz (1718) he had gained Temesvar and parts of Serbia and Wallachia, only to lose these last two at the Peace of Belgrade (1739).

The bond between these different peoples was of the loosest description. They spoke eleven different languages or dialects; they had no common interests. Charles ruled his territories by different titles; he was Archduke of Austria, Duke of Milan, King of Bohemia and of Hungary; and the administration of each of the five groups into which they fell was a separate one. It surpassed the wit of man to adopt a policy which would suit all these at once. To advance down, or to the south of, the Danube meant the increase of the non-German element; yet the Turk could not be left in Hungary at least. Any attempt to add to the Italian territories would certainly be opposed by Spain, and in the last war had been resisted by France and the King of Sardinia, while any scheme for developing the trade of the Netherlands aroused the hostility of England and Holland.

It would appear that the best policy would have been to abandon Italy altogether; and either to have exchanged the Netherlands for Bavaria, an idea which was entertained, or to have surrendered that as well; and, as Prince Eugène advised, to have married the Emperor's eldest daughter and heiress,

## DOMINIONS OF CHARLE'S VI. Outside Italy (For Italy see Map p. 31)



**Gained at Treaty of Passarovitz 1718**

**Lost at Treaty of Belgrade 1739-----**

Extent at accession 1711

**Gained at Treaty of Utrecht 1713**



Maria Theresa, to Maximilian, the young electoral Prince of Bavaria. In this manner the way would have been prepared for the incorporation of a rich and German-speaking country, which marched with the Austrian lands ; the German element would have been strengthened, and a powerful kingdom might have been formed, which could have more successfully controlled the non-German Bohemia and Hungary.

But Charles was the victim of the great prospects of his earlier years. He had hoped, by the war of the Spanish Succession, to gain Spain and all her dependencies in Europe and in the New World, and thus to re-establish the Habsburg Empire of the great Charles V. He had neither the foresight nor the strength of character to confine himself to possibilities. It was long before he gave up his claim to the throne of Spain. Even then he clung with desperate tenacity to the poor morsels of the great inheritance which he had gained at Utrecht, and tried to increase them, now in this direction, now in that. He had not indeed been altogether unsuccessful ; but in his concentration upon foreign affairs he had neglected the much needed internal reforms, his finances were exhausted, his administration was utterly inefficient and unsystematic : there was no unity or cohesion between the different parts of his dominions, and the death of Prince Eugène in 1736 had deprived him of his only capable statesman and general. His prestige had been impaired of late, and he had been willing to sacrifice much to obtain the guarantee of Europe for his Pragmatic Sanction. Prince Eugène had warned him that a well-filled treasury and a well-drilled army would be of more value than a thousand such guarantees, and no sooner was he dead than the truth of this statement was seen.

The rule of the young Maria Theresa—she was barely twenty-four—was indeed accepted in the Austrian lands. She proceeded forthwith to declare her husband, ACCESSION OF MARIA THERESA Francis Stephen, late Duke of Lorraine, whom she had married in 1736, joint ruler, and hoped to secure his election to the Imperial crown. But her succession was nowhere very popular, the attitude of Bohemia and Hungary was doubtful, and Charles of Bavaria at once protested. Though the Wittelsbach Electors of Bavaria had at times inter-

married with the Habsburgs, and Charles himself had married the cousin of Maria Theresa, they had long been jealous of their more powerful neighbour. The Elector of the day had joined France in the war of the Spanish Succession, and Bavaria, though neutral since that time, had not supported the Emperor in his wars.

Charles of Bavaria, indeed, had been anxious to secure the hand of Maria Theresa for his son, but he had been refused, and he now laid claim to the Austrian inheritance. His claim was based on the will of Ferdinand I, the brother of Charles V (1564), whose daughter had married the then Duke. According to the Bavarian copy, that will had promised the succession to the Bavarian house on the failure of 'male heirs' to the Habsburgs; but in the Austrian copy the words were 'legitimate heirs', which would, of course, include Maria Theresa. Nevertheless, had he found no support, Charles would hardly have pressed his cause. Of the European Powers, England, Holland and Russia stood by their guarantees; but the policy of the Elector of Saxony, now King of Poland, and of the King of Sardinia, who had some shadowy rights themselves, was doubtful; while Fleury declared that the guarantee of France had only been in support of 'lawful possession', and not of a mere claim.

While matters thus hung in the balance, Europe was astonished by the unexpected move of Frederick the Great of Prussia. Frederick's ministers had advised him to make a demand for Silesia as the price for his support of Maria Theresa's other claims. Silesia is a valuable district, about one-third the size of England. It completely surrounds the upper waters of the Oder, and as its boundary to the north is within twenty-four hours' march of Berlin, its possession was of the greatest strategic importance to Prussia. Frederick knew its value full well, but this conventional way of proceeding was not to his taste. He was convinced that Austria would refuse his offer, and therefore determined to follow the injunction once given him by his father that he should strike quickly when it was necessary to strike at all. Without giving any warning, therefore, he ordered his army to advance, and by the end of January had

FREDERICK  
SEIZES SILESIA,  
DEC. 1740

occupied Breslau, the capital ; then, saying that he had moved to save Silesia from others who had claims on the inheritance of Maria Theresa, he offered to negotiate. His offers were indignantly rejected. Maria Theresa refused to treat as long as a Prussian soldier remained in the country, and sent an army to oppose him. This was, however, defeated at the battle of Mollwitz, and Frederick was practically master of all Lower Silesia.

BATTLE OF  
MOLLWITZ,  
APRIL 1741

Attempts have been made to justify this unwarrantable conduct. As for certain ancient claims which Prussia had on Silesia, they are best answered by the King himself, who acknowledged that they were worthless. It may be argued that Frederick was not bound by the guarantee given by his father at Wusterhausen (1726) to support the claims of Maria Theresa, for that promise had been made on a condition which Austria never kept (cf. p. 109), and Frederick William I had then warned Charles that his son would avenge him. This might have justified Frederick in taking the opportunity to bargain for Silesia, but is no defence of this unprovoked attack upon a defenceless neighbour ; indeed, Frederick himself admitted that his father would have fulfilled his obligations. It is strange that Frederick should have acted as he did. He would have been in nearly, if not quite, as good a position if he had sent an ultimatum, with twenty-four hours' notice, before he marched, and would have placed himself in the right in the eyes of other Powers. But he was a cynic. He affected to despise the ordinary conventionalities as trivial matters, and loved to shock the world. 'Ambition', he said, 'and the desire to make myself talked about, these were my motives.'

The war, however, was still confined to Prussia and Austria. Once more, as in the war of the Polish Succession, it lay with France to decide whether it should become European. For Bavaria needed money, and as England was at that moment engaged in a war with Spain over commercial questions, and held the Mediterranean, Spain could not move on Italy unless France gave her a passage for her troops. Finally Russia, owing to the death of Anna (October 1740), was not at the moment in a position to intervene.

Fleury's policy had of late been tending towards the

promotion of better relations between Austria and France, and a Franco-Austrian alliance seemed to be the goal for which he was aiming. However, the war party in France was too much for him, and their cry that now at last the moment had come finally to ruin Austria proved irresistible. In May 1741, therefore, Fleury concluded the Treaty of Nymphenburg with Charles Albert of Bavaria, and that of Breslau with Frederick in June. Maria Theresa was to have part of Austria and Hungary, the rest of her territories were to be partitioned; Charles Albert of Bavaria was to be elected Emperor. This decided the matter, and shortly most of the European Powers, except Russia, had taken sides.

The coalition against Maria Theresa appeared overwhelming. It included France, Prussia, Sardinia, Saxony and the Electors of Bavaria, Cologne and the Palatinate. The only allies that Maria Theresa could gain were Holland and England. Of these, the Dutch were kept at home by fear of France. George II declared Hanover neutral, and Walpole only sent subsidies, and moreover kept urging Maria Theresa to come to terms with Frederick.

Nevertheless, the coalition was not so formidable as it seemed, for Bavaria and France alone were united in their aims. Saxony could be bought off, Charles Emanuel could never be trusted, Spain would only act in Italy. Above all, the interests of France and Frederick were sure to clash. France did not wish to make Frederick too powerful, while Frederick had no desire to see French influence too great in Germany. If he could only gain Silesia, he would gladly withdraw. To keep these points in mind will help us to follow more clearly the complications which ensued.

France began the war by sending two armies into the field, one to the Lower Rhine to intimidate Hanover into neutrality, the other to co-operate with the Bavarian army, while Frederick acted on the defensive in Silesia.

In September 1741, the united French and Bavarian forces occupied Linz on the Danube, and were within three days' march of Vienna, which was so ill-prepared as to be at their mercy. Instead of pressing on, however, they turned north-

wards into Bohemia, capturing Prague on 25 November. But they had thus missed the chance of settling the war at once, and had exposed Bavaria to a counter-attack, while Maria Theresa, seeing the necessity of conciliating Prussia for CONVENTION OF the moment at least, made the secret convention KLEIN-SCHNEL- of Klein-Schnellendorf with Frederick, whereby LENDORF, she allowed him to hold Silesia without definitely OCT. 1741 acknowledging his claim.

She was now free to concentrate her attack on the Bavarians and French. The Hungarians, after long negotiations, had in return for a guarantee of their privileges now recognized her title, in spite of her being a woman, and under the old cry 'Moriatur pro Regi nostro Maria Theresa,' supported her most loyally. She was therefore able to check the advance of the allies in Bohemia and to threaten Bavaria itself.

Unfortunately for her, Frederick now began to be alarmed. / Whichever way the fortunes of war might turn, he dreaded lest he should be left out in the cold. The secret convention had given him time to strengthen his hold on Silesia, and it was no longer of much use. Seizing, therefore, the pretext that FREDERICK the convention had been divulged, he again AGAIN TAKES PART IN THE WAR AND CAPTURES OLMUTZ, DEC. 1741 intervened, and entered Moravia (Dec.), seizing the important town of Olmutz. By this move he threatened the position of the two Austrian armies in Bohemia and Bavaria, and had the French and Saxon army, which was then at Prague, heartily co-operated, Vienna itself might have fallen. The French and Saxons, however, refused to leave Bohemia, and in April, Frederick, who had advanced to, and was besieging Brünn, finding himself unsupported, was forced to abandon Moravia and drop back into Bohemia.

Furious at the conduct of his allies, he now once more offered Austria terms. Maria Theresa declined them until she heard that Charles of Lorraine had been defeated at Chotusitz on the Upper Elbe. Then at last she consented to treat. By the Treaty of Berlin, Frederick, in return for the definite cession of Silesia, promised to remain neutral. BATTLE OF CHOTUSITZ, MAY 1742 TREATY OF BERLIN, JULY 1742

The Treaty of Berlin thus ended what is known as the First Silesian War.

END OF FIRST  
SILESIA WAR

This set Maria Theresa free again to concentrate her attack on France and Bavaria. Other events also helped her cause. In February 1742, Walpole had fallen from power, and Carteret, who now guided the foreign policy of George II, was anxious to pursue a bolder policy and join Austria in humiliating France. An English army was accordingly dispatched to the Netherlands, and, early in 1743, it moved up the Rhine to threaten the communications of the French in Bavaria with France. In September 1742, Saxony also withdrew from the allies, while in January of the next year Fleury died, and France under the immediate government of the incapable Louis XV fell into confusion.

IMPROVED  
PROSPECTS  
OF AUSTRIA

The Austrians, therefore, had little difficulty in driving the French from Bohemia before the end of 1742, and in occupying Munich in the following June, the remnants of the French army having already gone. The Elector of Bavaria, Charles Albert, who had been elected Emperor in January 1742, was forced to fly from his dominions, to suspend hostilities, and to leave Bavaria in Austrian hands till the conclusion of the war (June 1743).

In the same month the French were defeated at Dettingen by a mixed army of English, Hanoverians, and Austrians led by King George of England himself. Oddly enough, war had not yet been formally declared between England and France, both sides claiming to be acting as intermediaries only for their respective allies.

BATTLE OF  
DETTINGEN,  
JUNE 1743

Maria Theresa should now have made peace. The Emperor Charles offered to renounce his claims to her hereditary dominions and to abandon the French alliance on condition that he should be left in quiet possession of Bavaria and of the Imperial title. Unfortunately, Maria Theresa was elated by her success. Sublime in adversity, she was remorseless in her revenge. She hoped to compensate herself in Bavaria for the loss of Silesia and to humble the Bourbons. Accordingly, supported by England, Holland and Saxony, she concluded the Treaty of Worms with Charles Emanuel of Sardinia. That Prince had entered

TREATY OF  
WORMS,  
SEPT. 1743

the war in the spirit of a mercenary, and was open to the highest bidder; on the promise of material acquisitions he agreed to join in driving the Spanish Bourbons from Italy.

As might have been expected, Frederick the Great at once became alarmed. He did not wish to see Maria Theresa be-

'FREDERICK  
AGAIN INTER-  
VENES, MAY 1744 come too strong. If the new league was success-

ful, as seemed not improbable, the Allies might turn on him, and, with his usual suspicion, he observed that no guarantee of his possession of Silesia had been made in the public terms of the Treaty of Worms. Accordingly in May 1744, he formed the Union of Frankfort with the Emperor and some of the other German Princes, and in August again invaded Bohemia. This compelled the Austrians to recall their army which had crossed the Rhine in June, and seemed to have a fair prospect of recovering Alsace and Lorraine. Meanwhile, France and Spain had drawn more closely together. In October 1743, by the Treaty of Fontaine-

THE FAMILY  
COMPACT,  
OCT. 1743 bleau, they formed the second 'Family Compact' for the mutual defence of Bourbon interests, and France now definitely declared war on

England (Feb. 1744), prepared to support the Young Pretender in his projected attempt, and in June 1744, joined the Union of Frankfort. It is idle to discuss the question of morality in dealing with the Prussian King, but his action is easy to understand. He could hardly be expected to remain passive while Maria Theresa strengthened herself, and her future conduct showed that nothing short of necessity would force her to abandon all hopes of regaining Silesia, which she termed the 'fairest jewel of her crown.'

With the summer of 1744, therefore, we enter into a new phase of the struggle, which has been called the Second

SECOND  
SILESIAN WAR,  
MAY 1744-DEC.  
1745 Silesian War. The two leagues again stood face to face, the one intent on dismembering

Austria, the other on humbling the Bourbons and Prussia, while the entrance of France and England into the war as principals, reminds us that the struggle for India and America had already begun.

The death of the Emperor in the following January still

further altered the character of the war. His successor in the Bavarian Electorate, Maximilian Joseph, at once offered to give up all claims on the Austrian dominions and promised to vote for the husband of Maria Theresa at the coming Imperial election.

DEATH OF  
EMPEROR  
CHARLES VII,  
JAN. 1745

Maria Theresa accepted his terms in the Treaty of Füssen and turned her energies against her arch-enemy Frederick. In May 1745, the Elector of Saxony was induced by a promise of a share of the Prussian dominions to abandon his policy of neutrality, and the Tzarina Elizabeth joined the Austrian alliance.

TREATY OF  
FÜSSEN,  
APRIL 1745

The fate of Frederick now seemed sealed. His only allies were France and Spain. Spain could not help him, and France was intent on the Netherlands. Here in May, led by Marshal Saxe, she revenged the defeat of Dettingen in the victory of Fontenoy, and shortly afterwards the outbreak of the Jacobite insurrection in Scotland caused the recall to England of the British troops, thereby allowing Saxe to overrun the greater part of the Netherlands. Hoping to get Maria Theresa to bestir herself to defend the Netherlands, England once more sought to arrange terms with Frederick, who had recently (4 June) repulsed at Hohenfriedberg an Austrian attack on Silesia, and had followed this up by again invading Bohemia.

FRENCH  
VICTORY AT  
FONTENOY,  
MAY 1745

FREDERICK'S  
VICTORY AT  
HOHENFRIED-  
BERG, JUNE 1745

England once more urged Maria Theresa to come to terms, and in August secretly promised Frederick that he should retain Silesia. Maria, however, was obdurate. She declared that there was no safety till Frederick was completely crushed; she would prefer, she said, to make peace with France, and actually offered terms. Fortunately for the King of Prussia, Louis XV, elated by the success of his arms in the Netherlands and in Italy, refused, and shortly after the defeat of the Austrians at Sohr and that of the Saxons at Kesselsdorf, followed by the Prussian occupation of Dresden, convinced Maria Theresa of the uselessness of continuing the struggle against Prussia. With an indignant protest at the conduct of England—'Heavens,' she said, 'see how

AUSTRIAN  
AND SAXON  
DEFEATS AT  
SOHR, SEPT.,  
AND KESSELS-  
DORF, DEC. 1745



we are treated by our allies'—she submitted to the inevitable and made a Treaty of Dresden with Frederick.

**TREATY OF DRESDEN, DEC. 1745; END OF SECOND SILESIAN WAR** By this Treaty, Frederick recognized Francis Stephen of Lorraine, the husband of Maria Theresa, as Emperor; and guaranteed Maria Theresa in her possessions in Germany, though not elsewhere, while Austria promised to leave Frederick in possession of Silesia.

Frederick did not attempt to defend his conduct in this for the third time deserting his allies, except by saying that the French had neglected his interests in the late campaign, and that they should have known that he would forsake them when it suited him.

The war was now practically confined to a struggle of Austria and her allies against France and Spain in Italy and the Netherlands, and between England and France at sea. D'Argenson, the French Foreign Minister, indulged in a scheme of driving the foreigner, both Spanish and Austrian, from Italy, and of forming a league of native republics or kingdoms under a federal bond. The dream, though interesting as an anticipation of what was to come one day, was not to be realized.

**FAILURE OF D'ARGENSON'S ITALIAN POLICY** It would mean the expulsion of Don Carlos and Don Philip from Italy, and this Elizabeth Farnese would do her best to frustrate, while Charles Emanuel of Sardinia feared that, if it were successful, Italy would fall under the tutelage of France. The policy of this shiftless prince had throughout been directed towards maintaining a balance between the Habsburgs and the Bourbons. He therefore only carried on negotiations as a blind to gain time, till Austria should be ready to move. Spain, angry at D'Argenson's policy, did not co-operate. Accordingly, Austria and Sardinia had little difficulty in clearing Italy of both French and Spanish troops, and even attacked Provence. In the follow-

**DEFEAT OF YOUNG PRETENDER AT CULLODEN, APRIL 1746** ing April the defeat of the Young Pretender at Culloden destroyed all hopes of a Stuart restoration, while at sea the French suffered two serious reverses, being defeated off Cape Finisterre, May 1747, by Anson, and in October by Hawke,

with the result that their overseas trade was practically brought to a standstill. On the other hand, the French, led by that great general, though profligate man, Marshal Saxe, completely overran the Netherlands and even entered Holland.

FRENCH DE-  
FEATED AT  
SEA BUT SUC-  
CESSFUL IN  
NETHERLANDS

Thus the successes of the Austrians in Italy were balanced by the victories of Marshal Saxe in the Netherlands, while if in India the French admiral Labourdonnais was able to take Madras (1746), in North America the French lost Louisbourg (1745), the capital of the island of Cape Breton, which guards the entrance to the St. Lawrence.

Under these circumstances, it was but natural that the Powers should begin to weary of the war, and that quarrels

DISSENSIONS  
BETWEEN THE  
ALLIES

should arise between the Allies themselves. England was little pleased at the way in which

her subsidies were used by Austria to carry on the war in Italy, while the defence of the Netherlands was left to her. Charles Emanuel of Sardinia, unwilling to see the Austrians too successful in Italy, was again intriguing

PHILIP V OF  
SPAIN SUC-  
CEDED BY  
FERDINAND VI,  
JULY 1746

with France. The death of Philip of Spain and the accession of Ferdinand VI, his only surviving son by his first marriage, had weakened the influence of Elizabeth Farnese.

In a word, all the Powers except Austria were anxious for peace; Maria Theresa, however, having secured a promise of Russian support, was eager to go on, but was powerless without the hearty co-operation of England and of Sardinia. The actual terms of the peace were, however, dictated by France and England, and were only tardily accepted by the other Powers.

By the terms of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle which was signed by France, Holland and England in April 1748, and finally accepted by all in November:

THE PEACE  
OF AIX-LA-  
CHAPELLE,  
APRIL-NOV. 1748

1. The acquisition of Silesia by Frederick was guaranteed.
2. Savoy and Nice were restored to Charles Emanuel who also received Upper Novara and Vigevano, 'two leaves of the Milanese artichoke'.
3. Parma and Piacenza were ceded to Don Philip.

4. The French evacuated the Netherlands and, in exchange, recovered Louisbourg, the capital of Cape Breton.

5. Madras was restored to England on payment of a ransom of £400,000.

Three Powers, Frederick, Charles Emanuel and the Spanish Bourbons, were the chief gainers by the war. In France there was much discontent at this 'stupid peace' by which the Netherlands, a most valuable conquest, were surrendered partly to provide for an establishment in Italy for Don Philip, the cousin of the King. For the rest, if we except the acquisition of Silesia by Frederick, the results of this prolonged struggle were unimportant, while the peace itself is chiefly interesting on account of the jealousies and divisions among the allies themselves, which preceded it, and contributed to it, and which heralded the radical changes in alliances which were shortly to follow.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CHANGES IN EUROPEAN ALLIANCES—THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR

**B**Y no one was the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle more dis-  
liked than by Maria Theresa. She had been forced  
to surrender Parma and Piacenza in Italy, and above  
all, Silesia. She had protested against the clause which  
permanently guaranteed its possession to  
Frederick, and the war was no sooner over  
than she was preparing for another.

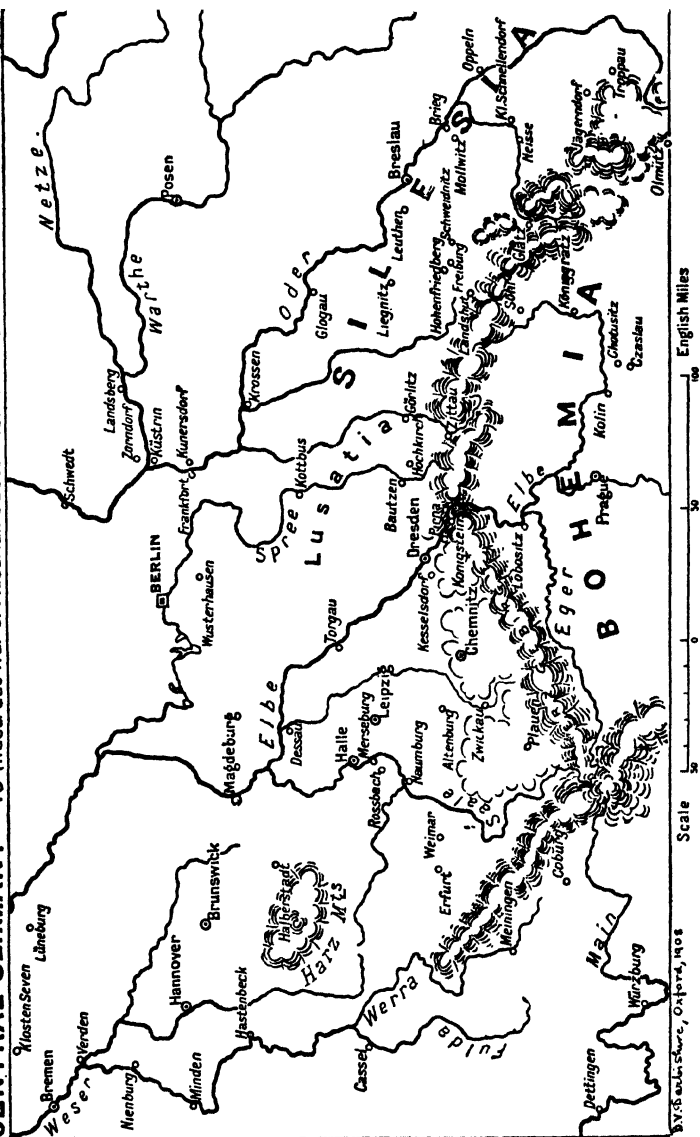
THE REFORMS  
OF MARIA  
THERESA

If, however, Austria was to have any chance of success, two things were essentially necessary: a reform of the government at home, and a change of alliances abroad. Hitherto the old councillors had, as the Empress herself said, 'been too prejudiced to give useful advice, and yet too respectable to be dismissed'. But about this time Providence removed most of these, and four new men came to the front who were eager for change: Ludwig Haugwitz, the son of a Saxon general, who had administrative experience in Silesia, and who, as Chancellor, devoted himself to reforming the government; Rudolf Chotek, who especially concerned himself with financial matters; Van Swieten, originally Maria Theresa's physician, who turned his attention to education; and Wenzel, Count Kaunitz, who became minister of foreign affairs.

The weakness of Austrian government will be easily appreciated if we remember the character of the lands over which it ruled (cf. p. 124), a collection of territories rather than a well-organized State; there was no common deliberative or legislative assembly, and only a confused and ineffective system of

ADMINISTRATIVE  
REFORMS OF  
MARIA THERESA

# CENTRAL GERMANY To illustrate War of Austrian Succession and Seven Years War



central justice and administration. Hence constant friction between various parts, the subordination of the interests of the State to those of the particular province or country, and a general want of efficiency.

Moreover, the nobles had too much power in their respective provinces, and, supported by the clergy, resolutely opposed reforms which touched their privileges.

No doubt a good many of these difficulties were due to deeper causes than the mere external form of government—that is, to the racial divisions and jealousies which have only been partly appeased by the tremendous rearrangements made in the political map on the dissolution of the Dual Monarchy after the Great War, though in the eighteenth century these were not yet the force they were to be a century later. Nevertheless something could be done by a reformed system of government; and to this end Haugwitz now devoted himself. The general lines of his reforms were those already adopted with such good effect by Austria's new rival Prussia, and their aim was to increase the central authority, and to weaken the powers of the local nobility. The political power of the Provincial Assemblies was reduced, especially in matters of finance and of the army. Instead of an annual contribution of men and money, a fixed sum was to be voted for ten years, and the administration of the army was taken entirely out of their hands. The local administration was placed in the hands of Colleges (Gubernium) appointed by the central authority and responsible to it, in which, though the nobles found a place, the real work was done by the professional members.

In the central departments the judicial work was definitely separated from the financial and administrative and placed in the hands of a Supreme Court (Hofrath).

The financial and the administrative affairs were placed in the hands of a Directory, or ministry of internal affairs, which was, however, subsequently separated into a central chamber (Kammer) of finance, and a supreme chancery (Kanzlei) for executive purposes. Hungary, however, retained its own separate chamber of finance (Kammer) and chancery (Kanzlei), nor would the Diet surrender any of its powers.

The Council of War, the only body which had hitherto represented unity, was continued, and later a better organized Privy Council (*Staats Rath*), with supreme control over these departments, took the place of the earlier secret conference of ministers.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time the army was increased and reformed. Conscription was introduced, the peace establishment fixed at 100,000, which could be increased in time of war to 195,000, and better drill introduced. These reforms were to prove of great value in the next war, when the Austrian army showed itself far more efficient than before, and nearly on a level with the Prussian.

The financial system was next improved by Chotek. The exemptions of nobles from taxation were abolished, a uni-  
 FINANCIAL,      versal income tax and a graduated poll tax  
 SOCIAL AND      introduced. Many internal customs were abol-  
 EDUCATIONAL    ished. The trade of Trieste and the Mediter-  
 REFORMS        anean was encouraged, and canals and roads were improved.

At the same time the lot of the peasants was bettered. The jurisdiction of their lords over them was regulated, their dues reduced, and they were offered the opportunity of buying the lands they held.

Lastly, under the advice of Van Swieten, the University of Vienna was brought more closely under Government control, and at a somewhat later date a system of primary education was established.

While steps were thus being taken to develop the internal resources of the country and to make the government and the army more efficient, Kaunitz was urging his mistress to look for new allies.

This remarkable man, who dressed like a dandy and had the airs of a coxcomb, had, by the ability with which he had conducted some diplomatic missions, completely won the confidence of Maria Theresa, and was per-  
 KAUNITZ AND      mitted by that proud lady to treat her in a  
 HIS IDEAS OF      manner allowed to no one else. His views were  
 FOREIGN POLICY  
 based on the central point that the rise of Prussia had revolu-

<sup>1</sup> These reforms did not apply to the Netherlands or to the Italian possessions, nor to Hungary.

tionized the balance of power in Europe. Prussia was now the arch-enemy of Austria and must be resisted; and Silesia, whence Frederick could strike a blow at the very heart of her possessions, must be retaken. Of the old allies, the Maritime Powers, England and Holland, had by their conduct in the late war shown that they had no longer the interests of Austria at heart. England had even forced her to cede Silesia, to make concessions in Italy to the equally detested Sardinia, and to sign the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Russia, owing to constant changes in the order of succession and to the palace revolutions, could not be depended upon. Under these circumstances, the true ally was France, for she was as much concerned in checking the power of Prussia as Austria herself.

Although there had been indications of the truth of Kaunitz' view during the late war, this complete reversal of a traditional policy was opposed by the Emperor and some of the other ministers. The Empress herself, however, turned a willing ear to it, and in 1750, Kaunitz was appointed

KAUNITZ,  
AMBASSADOR AT  
VERSAILLES,  
1750-1753

Austrian Ambassador at Versailles. Here he succeeded in gaining the personal favour of Louis XV, and his mistress, Madame de Pompadour. The King, however, at this moment was very unpopular. The Government, now practically in the hands of Madame de Pompadour, was in great confusion, and engaged in a serious quarrel with the 'Parlement' of Paris over the question of taxation and the treatment of the Jansenists. This was scarcely the moment to reverse the traditional policy of centuries. The proposals of Kaunitz,

KAUNITZ,  
CHANCELLOR,  
1753

therefore, met with no approval, and on his return to Vienna in 1753 to become Chancellor and Prime Minister, there seemed little prospect of success.

At this moment the conflict between England and France in America, which had been long smouldering, entered upon a new phase. Hitherto there had been much friction over the exact boundaries of Nova Scotia ceded to England in 1713. Now a much more serious cause of quarrel presented itself.

CONFLICT  
BETWEEN  
ENGLAND AND  
FRANCE IN  
AMERICA



With the exception of Jamaica and a few West Indian islands, the English colonies were confined to a comparatively narrow strip between the Alleghany mountains and the sea. To the north lay Canada in the hands of the French, and to the south their colony of Louisiana, commanding the mouths of the Mississippi and originally colonized from Canada itself.<sup>1</sup>

It was the aim of the French more effectually to occupy the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi, and thus to connect their colonies in the south with Canada. Had they succeeded in their attempt, the English would have been prevented from pushing westward, and the rest of North America, to the shores of the Pacific, might have belonged to France. By the year 1750 English traders and settlers were crossing the Alleghanies and an Ohio Company had been founded. When therefore Duquesne, the Governor of Canada, seized the valley of the Ohio, the English colony of Virginia thought

it necessary to resist, and sent against the French a body of militia under Washington, who was however defeated. One year later, a stronger force, under General Braddock, and including two battalions sent out from home, shared a like fate, and the general himself fell.

Unless England was prepared to submit, it was clear that war must be declared against France herself. The English Government seems to have assumed that it could count upon Austrian support, and expected that the French would attack Hanover, and seize the barrier fortresses which England thought necessary to protect Holland and her own com-

<sup>1</sup> The *English* colonies were : (1) The indeterminate territories held by the Hudson Bay Company, north of Canada (founded 1670) ; (2) The thirteen colonies with Acadia, though its limits were disputed ; (3) Newfoundland ; (4) The Bermudas and Bahama Islands ; (5) Jamaica and Honduras ; (6) Barbados, Montserrat, Antigua and Tobago. The *French* were : (1) Canada and the Island of Cape Breton ; (2) Louisiana ; (3) French Guiana in S. America ; (4) The islands of Guadeloupe, Martinique, Grenada and S. Domingo (or half of the present Haiti). Dominica, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent were neutral.

mercial interests. As England could not hope to resist this attack without the aid of some continental power, the English ministry approached their old ally Austria, and asked her to send troops to defend the Electorate of Hanover, to rebuild the barrier fortresses which had fallen into decay, and to send her troops into the Austrian Netherlands. The demands of England seemed to confirm the assertion of Kaunitz that her alliance was burdensome; Maria Theresa was indignant at the way she had been treated in the war of the Austrian Succession, and had no intention of being involved in war for the sake of a purely colonial quarrel, she considered her alliance with England as directed less against France than against her bitterest and not less dangerous foe, Frederick of Prussia, and she felt that the English proposals placed the whole burden on her and might well result in a fatal dispersion of Austrian strength. As for the Netherlands, it had been the persistent policy of England and of Holland to interfere with their development, and she would neither increase the army of occupation nor rebuild the fortresses

GEORGE II  
THEREFORE  
TURNS TO  
RUSSIA AND  
PRUSSIA

unless England and Holland would co-operate. George II of England therefore turned to Russia, and concluded a subsidy Treaty with the Tzarina Elizabeth (Sept. 1755), who promised to provide 55,000 men for the defence of Hanover. On hearing of this treaty Frederick was much perturbed. He had reason to believe that Maria Theresa was forming a league against him. He had learnt through the treachery of Menzel, a clerk in the Saxon service, that a defensive treaty against Prussia had been signed between Austria, Russia and Saxony in 1746, during the late war. He knew that negotiations to the same effect had been going on since the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. The news, therefore, of the agreement between England and Russia made him apprehensive of the use to which these Russians might be put. The personal relations between George and the Prussian King were by no means cordial, and there were further disputes, arising out of the late war, which had not been settled. But he did not wish to add England to the number of his enemies,

or to be involved in having to attack Hanover. Rather than that he was prepared to come to terms with England, and

FREDERICK  
MAKES CON-  
VENTION OF  
WESTMINSTER,  
JAN. 1756

thereby free himself from the dangers attendant on the introduction of Russian troops into Hanover. Accordingly he concluded the Convention of Westminster ; by which—

1. Both powers guaranteed the neutrality of Germany, and agreed to oppose the entry of any foreign army.

2. Both powers guaranteed each other's possessions.

In the meantime, France had dispatched the Duc du Nivernois as ambassador to Berlin in response to an earlier invitation from Frederick. He was met by the news of the convention. Frederick, indeed, attempted to show that his agreement with England was purely defensive, and did not necessarily pledge him to act offensively against France. He further proceeded to explain to Louis how advantageous to France the neutralization of Germany would be, as it would enable her to concentrate her resources on the maritime war with England. By this advice he hoped to keep on good terms with both countries, and to isolate Austria. Louis XV, however, while furious at Frederick's defection and at his presuming to offer advice to France, viewed with alarm the quite unlikely possibility that England might induce Austria and Prussia to combine against him. He therefore allowed the Abbé Bernis, then at the head of affairs, to accept the offers of Kaunitz and in May the First Treaty of Versailles was concluded accordingly. The terms of the treaty were very general.

FRANCE AND  
AUSTRIA  
CONCLUDE FIRST  
TREATY OF VER-  
SAILLES, MAY  
1756

1. Each power guaranteed the other's possessions in Europe, promised to uphold the Peace of Westphalia, and to assist the other, if attacked, with 24,000 men.

2. Austria expressly promised to assist France if she were attacked by any ally of England on the Continent, though she expressly declared herself neutral in the actual war between France and England in the New World and India, while Louis agreed to respect the neutrality of the Netherlands in the event of his attacking Hanover.

Meanwhile, Elizabeth of Russia, declaring that her agreement with England had been made to defend Hanover from

Frederick, and that it had been annulled by the Convention of Westminster, now offered Maria Theresa to attack Frederick with 80,000 men, and promised not to make peace till Silesia was regained.

Frederick the Great became convinced that his destruction was being prepared. He, therefore, massed his troops on the frontier. When Austria did the same, he demanded an explanation, and on receiving an equivocal answer, first asked the Elector of Saxony for leave to march through his territory, then proceeded to occupy it, and insisted that the Elector should join him. 'Good God,' said the Saxon envoy, 'such conduct is without example.' 'I think not,' answered Frederick; 'but even if that were so, are you not aware that I pride myself on being original?' And when his minister Podewils advised him to refrain from so rash a step, he contemptuously dismissed him with an 'Adieu, monsieur de la politique timide'. Augustus of Saxony, contrary to expectation, refused to comply and retired to the fortresses of Pirna and Königstein, which stand on the borders of Saxony where the Elbe forces its way through the Bohemian mountains, in the country now called Saxon Switzerland.

When, however, the Austrians under Marshal Browne advanced to the relief of the Elector, Frederick masked the fortresses and met him with half his army at Lobositz. The action, though indecisive, forced Browne to retire and the Elector was obliged to capitulate. He betook himself to Warsaw, his Polish capital, while his army was compelled to join the Prussians.

In the *Mémoire raisonnée*, which Frederick subsequently published, he attempted to justify his conduct in thus invading a country without declaration of war. Unfortunately, the Menzel documents do not prove that Saxony had actually made an alliance with Austria against him.<sup>1</sup> The policy of

<sup>1</sup> In August 1747, Saxony had joined the defensive alliance of St. Petersburg concluded in May 1746, between Austria, Russia, England and Holland. But this alliance was mainly defensive and had been made after the Peace of Dresden.

the Saxon minister, Count Brühl, may be described as one of 'I dare not waiting on I would'. He rejoiced at the prospect of a coalition against Prussia; he had listened to the proposals of Austria, and when an opportunity offered he probably would have joined the coalition. But he had done no more, and it has been well said that, if we remember the usual methods of diplomacy, most Powers would, on the ground adduced by Frederick, be justified at any moment in forcibly entering their neighbour's country. Frederick, however, cared little for the opinion of Europe. The real question for him was the practical advantage to be gained. He had learnt by the experience of the late war the danger of having Saxony as an enemy, and the importance of that country as a basis of operations. Nevertheless, it may be questioned whether it would not have been better to have moved on Austria by way of Silesia. The Saxon business delayed his operations for more than a month, and gave Austria time to prepare. Whatever may be the decision of military experts, it cannot be doubted that in other ways Frederick's conduct increased his difficulties. Although, as he alleged, he had probably only anticipated attack, and had thereby deprived his enemies of time in which to perfect their preparations, his invasion of Saxony gave him no claim on British assistance under the Treaty of Westminster, while it provided Austria with a claim for French assistance under the defensive clauses of the Treaty of Versailles. Moreover, it is probable that, but for this attack, Russia might have remained neutral. Anyhow, his methods exposed him to the charge of being a thoroughly untrustworthy and dangerous man, who must be crushed.

In January 1757, the Imperial Diet declared war against him as a disturber of the public peace. In the same month the Tzarina Elizabeth, by the Convention of St. Petersburg, undertook, in return for payment, to aid Austria in regaining Silesia and in partitioning Prussia; and, finally, in May 1757, just one year after the first Treaty of Versailles, France signed a second treaty, by which—

THE DIET  
DECLARES WAR  
ON FREDERICK,  
JAN. 1757

SECOND TREATY  
OF VERSAILLES,  
MAY 1757

1. France was to assist Maria Theresa with troops and a substantial subsidy, besides putting 100,000 men into the field on her account. She was also to continue the war till Silesia had been gained and Prussia partitioned, 'in order that she might no longer disturb the public tranquillity'.

2. On the acquisition of Silesia, Austria was to cede Mons, Ostend, and other districts in the Netherlands to France, and to give the remainder to Don Philip, the son-in-law of Louis XV, in return for Parma and Piacenza, which were to go to Austria, as well as the reversion of the Netherlands, in the event of Don Philip leaving no children.

Thus Kaunitz had gained his end, and had completely revolutionized the political alliances of Europe. England, the traditional ally of Austria, had become her enemy, and France, her traditional enemy, had become her friend.

That France had made a great mistake has generally been assumed. Yet it is difficult to see what alternative she had.

POLICY OF  
THE TREATY  
DISCUSSED      It has been argued that she should not have interfered in the European contest at all, but have devoted herself to the struggle with England for the command of the sea, and for the possession of India and America. Yet it may be doubted whether, if she had adopted this policy, she would even so have been successful. The end of the Austrian Succession War had left her greatly inferior to England at sea, and little had been done since to repair her losses. A country that starts on a naval war at such a disadvantage has the greatest difficulty in ever gaining the supremacy. A navy cannot be made in a day; and once the enemy has obtained the superiority, and with it the command of the sea, any new ships are sure to be destroyed as soon as they venture out of harbour, and before they have had time to practise their crews. The French navy had been neglected of late, and France was now to pay the penalty. The command of the sea once gone, the loss of Canada and of India was inevitable; and yet, that France should abandon her possessions without a struggle could scarcely be expected. The obvious course was for her to strike at England in a quarter where her great military superiority could be brought to bear. The troops to whom the English fleet could deny a passage to Canada or the West Indies or India, could not be prevented by ships or

seas from reaching Hanover. By overrunning Hanover France could 'conquer America in Germany' and obtain in Europe a substantial set-off against the inevitable colonial losses.

It would therefore seem that her real mistake was that, in the Second Treaty of Versailles, she did not ask enough in return for her alliance, so that, in the event of success, Austria would reap all the advantage. Had she demanded a larger share of the Netherlands, and to be put in immediate possession of part of it, Austria could hardly have refused, and England might not have been able to prevent it. It was certainly absurd that the chief return for the enormous sacrifices France was asked to make was the establishment of the Spanish Don Philip in the Netherlands, especially when his brother, the King of Spain, declined to give his aid.

Indeed, it might be argued that the true alternative for France was to have concentrated her whole attention on the European struggle. She never wished to rule India. Many in France thought the colonies themselves scarcely worth the expense; and as she was doomed to fail on the sea, her better course would have been to come to terms with England, which would certainly have been quite possible, without the loss of Louisiana or Canada, and to have thrown herself resolutely on the side of Austria.

Later events have shown that the rise of Prussia was to be the great danger of France. There was much in Kaunitz' argument that Prussia was the real enemy, not only of Austria, but of France; and that, under the new circumstances, they were the true allies. If French intervention in the Seven Years' War resulted both in failure and humiliation in Europe and in disaster overseas, the main reason is to be found, not in errors of policy, but in blunders in its execution, in the inefficiency of her army and navy, which again was the direct outcome of the condition to which the misgovernment of Louis XV, after the death of Fleury, had reduced her. So long as the Government depended upon the whims and the personal dislikes of the frivolous yet ambitious mistress of a sensual and feeble King, efficiency and success were improbable, whatever the policy pursued.

For Austria, indeed, Kaunitz seemed to have made a

brilliant stroke, and the ruin of the arch-enemy Frederick appeared inevitable; yet, as events proved, Kaunitz had only gained a useless ally in France, and made an abiding enemy of Prussia.

In the war which became general in 1757 all the Powers of Europe were engaged, except Holland, Spain and Sardinia.

POWERS EN-  
GAGED IN THE  
SEVEN YEARS'  
WAR

Holland did not feel herself interested enough to interfere. In Spain, Ferdinand VI was influenced by jealousy of his half-brother, Don Philip, and, now that Habsburg and Bourbon were in alliance, Charles Emanuel of Sardinia could no longer play off one against the other, and had lost his importance.

The struggle, therefore, falls into two divisions: the contest between England and France for supremacy at sea, in India and in North America, and that on the Continent.

The war on the Continent was confined to the East of the Rhine and centres upon Frederick himself. To the surprise

FREDERICK  
WINS THE  
BATTLE OF  
PRAGUE,  
MAY 1757

of his opponents, he took the initiative, and advancing against the Austrians, who were holding Prague, he was able, by the superior efficiency of his troops, to outmanœuvre Prince Charles of Lorraine, the Emperor's brother, on the battlefield, to defeat him, and to blockade him in Prague. Here, however, his success ended for the time. Marshal Daun, waiting till he had a sufficient force, marched from the East to the relief of the beleaguered city. Frederick marched against him, and, rashly attacking his superior numbers in their strong position at Kolin on the Upper Elbe, was decisively defeated, and was lucky to be allowed to evacuate Bohemia, without being completely crushed.

BUT IS  
DEFEATED AT  
KOLIN, 18 JUNE,  
1757

Meanwhile, the Duke of Cumberland, son of George II, and his Hanoverian troops were beaten by the French under Marshal d'Estrées at Hastenbeck, and the Duke agreed to the Convention of Kloster Seven, by which his troops were allowed to retreat under promise that they would not serve again for a year, and Hanover was handed over to the French till the conclusion of the war.

FRENCH  
VICTORY AT  
HASTEN-  
BECK AND  
CONVENTION  
OF KLOSTER  
SEVEN, JULY-  
SEPT. 1757



Nor were matters better in the North. In August the Russian Vic- Russian Apraxin won the battle of Gross  
TORY AT GROSS Jägerndorf on the Pregel and in September  
JÄGERNDORF, the Swedes invaded Pomerania.  
AUG. 1757

The Austrian army under Charles of Lorraine and Daun now advanced into Silesia, while the Imperial army and the French under Soubise, having occupied the Prussian possessions in Westphalia, moved on Saxony.

Frederick appeared to be doomed. His enemies were closing in on all sides, and to resist them he had but one army in the field. That he escaped is to be  
REASONS FOR attributed partly to the want of co-operation  
FAILURE OF between the French and the Austrian com-  
THE ALLIES manders, partly to the superiority of the Prussian troops, causes which recurred again and again throughout the war. The Prussian army, originally the creation of Frederick's father (cf. p. 122), had been perfected by the experience of the late war, and since that time had been carefully looked after by Frederick himself. No luxury was allowed among the officers. The inferior officers, on whom so much depends, thoroughly knew their work and their men. Promotion was according to desert; insubordination was checked with a stern hand; the artillery had been improved, and the cavalry, under Seidlitz, made the most effective in Europe. Moreover, the army was inspired by the masterful personality of Frederick himself, a man who, though not originally a soldier in tastes, had, through the lessons of the late war, become one of the greatest generals, not only of his own, but of all times; and who, since he controlled the government as well, had never to subordinate his military operations to motives of State policy which were not his own.

Of the armies opposed to the Prussian King, that of the Austrians was by far the most efficient. It had been re-organized during and after the war of the Austrian Succession. Though inferior to the Prussian army in quality, it was much larger, and had it been well led, would have been most formidable. Unfortunately for Austria, Prince Charles of Lorraine was incapable and timid, and had no claim to command, other than that he was brother to the Emperor.

Marshal Daun, though a better general, was far too cautious and slow, and an adherent of false principles of strategy which caused him over and over again to fail to improve the openings he had won. Skilful on the defensive, he failed to realize the necessity of crushing a weary enemy by a vigorous counter-offensive, and it has been well said by Clausewitz that it was mainly owing to Daun that Frederick ultimately gained his object in this war, and that Maria Theresa failed in hers. Yet the chivalrous spirit of Maria Theresa forbade her to dismiss her loyal, if inefficient, servants. The Russian army proved itself formidable indeed, but its effectiveness was constantly checked, not only by the changeableness of Russian policy, but by the unfortunate custom of retiring at the end of every autumn behind the Vistula, and thus sacrificing the fruits of the summer's campaign. As for the Imperial army, it was really worthless. The contingents were formed of riff-raff. It had no common organization, nor even a common commissariat, and was feared rather by its friends than by its foes.

The weakness of the French army, like that of Austria, lay not so much in the quality of the rank and file as in the inefficiency of its officers. These, recruited exclusively from the nobility, were brave enough on the battlefield, but were ignorant of their duties and luxurious in camp. Promotion was only to be gained by favour or by purchase, and some were colonels while they were still boys. As a rule the regiments were raised by the colonels themselves, and much peculation was the result. Above all, the commands of the armies were given according to the whims of Madame de Pompadour, and any one, who incurred her enmity was quickly removed. Thus Marshal d'Estrées, who had won the battle of Hastenbeck, was superseded by the profligate Richelieu and the amiable but incapable Prince de Soubise. If we add to these causes the dismissal of Count d'Argenson from the Ministry of War because he dared to be independent, and the substitution of nonentities who had often purchased their offices, and the squandering of the revenue by misappropriation, bad administration, and even fraud,

we shall not be wrong in saying that the secret of French defeats is to be sought in the chamber of Madame de Pompadour.

In the late autumn of 1757, Frederick, having the advantage of the interior position, and safe from the East, owing to the retirement of the Russians into winter quarters, left the Prince of Brunswick-Bevern to hold Breslau against the Austrians, and threw himself on the united Imperial and French army under the command of Soubise at Rossbach, in Saxony. Once more, chiefly owing to his superior tactics and the efficiency of his cavalry and artillery, he won a decisive victory. The Imperial army dispersed, and the French retreated to the Rhine plundering, as was their wont.

He then turned back and attacked the Austrians who, under Charles of Lorraine and Daun, had taken Breslau.

AND THE BATTLE OF LEUTHEN, 5 DEC., 1757 Although his forces numbered little more than one half of those of the enemy, he defeated them at Leuthen, and regained almost all Silesia except Schweidnitz, which is of importance as commanding the pass from Breslau into Bohemia.

In the following spring, the misfortunes of the allies continued. In the first place, the English ministry refused to ratify the Convention of Kloster Seven. Various hitches had arisen over putting it into execution, and the Hanoverian army had not yet been disarmed. Accordingly on 28 November, after Rossbach had completely reversed the situation in Western Germany, the Convention was formally denounced, and Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick was placed at the head of a German army in British pay which drove the French under their hated leader Richelieu, known in Germany as "the Marauder," out of Westphalia and across the Rhine (April 1758). Frederick was subsequently reinforced by a British contingent, ultimately raised to 20,000 men, and for the remainder of the war this Anglo-German army bore the whole brunt of the French attacks, and not only thwarted their endeavours to secure Hanover as a set-off against Colonial losses, but relieved Frederick from all further

ENGLISH  
REPUDIATE  
THE CON-  
VENTION OF  
KLOSTER  
SEVEN, 1757

cause for anxiety for his right flank and rear. After Rossbach he never had again to meet the French.

Frederick, thus relieved from all apprehension from the West, and having now taken Schweidnitz, determined to make a bold stroke on Olmutz in Moravia. If he could take that important fortress and secure the valley of the March, he would threaten Vienna itself. He had twice attempted the same move during the war of the Austrian Succession, and now, as before, he did not succeed. Indeed, when we remember that Daun was behind him in Bohemia, and that the Russians were again advancing into Silesia, his move must be held to have been over-rash. Finding that his communications were threatened by Marshal Daun, he was forced to retreat through Bohemia, a movement which he carried out with masterly success in the presence of superior

FREDERICK'S  
VICTORY AT  
ZORNDORF,  
25 AUG., 1758

forces. Then, passing into Silesia, he dashed against the Russians, and after a desperate struggle of ten hours he worsted them at Zorndorf, near Custrin, on the Oder.

His difficulties were not, however, over. Two Austrian armies were on his track: one under Harrach pressed into Silesia; the other under Daun entered Lusatia, or Saxony east of the Elbe. Frederick turned against the latter. Trusting to the usual slowness of his adversary, he rashly exposed his flank. Daun, contrary to expectation, followed the advice of Marshal Lacy, an Irishman in the service of Maria Theresa, seized the opportunity offered, and once more

HIS DEFEAT  
AT HOCHKIRCH,  
14 OCT., 1758

beat his formidable antagonist at Hochkirch, near Bautzen. However, Daun, as usual, did not follow up his victory, and Frederick was able to drive Harrach from Silesia.

At the close of the year 1758, Frederick had on the whole the advantage over his enemies. His own dominions were intact; he still held most of Saxony, and had been relieved of all anxiety as to the French. He had won four pitched battles, and lost only two, or three if we include Gross Jägerndorf, where he was not personally present. Yet time was telling against him. His resources were well-nigh exhausted, and, although his artillery was still excellent,

especially his horse artillery, which he was the first to introduce into European warfare, he could only put 110,000 men into the field against 300,000. His veterans had been decimated, and his troops were many of them raw recruits. His adversaries had begun to adopt his tactics, and at Hochkirch had actually taken the offensive. From this time forward, therefore, he was forced to act on the defensive, and there were evident signs that he could not carry on the unequal contest much longer.

Moreover, the Abbé Bernis, the negotiator of the Treaty of Versailles, had been dismissed because he now saw the necessity of peace, and had been succeeded by the Duke of Choiseul, a far more able and independent man, and France under his leadership was likely to take a more active part.

The year 1759, therefore, opened gloomily enough for Frederick. In the summer he had once more to meet a combined attack from the Austrians and the Russians. Although in the battle which followed at Künersdorf, near Frankfort on the Oder, against the Russians who were strengthened by an Austrian contingent, the dash of the Prussians at first carried all before them, they failed in their attack on the last entrenchment, and beaten down by numbers, which were as usual two to one, suffered a severe repulse, mainly owing to the Austrian cavalry. Had Soltikoff, the Russian general, only pursued his advantage, Frederick must have been caught between him and Daun and overwhelmed. But Soltikoff, declaring that it was now the turn of the Austrians, desisted, and in October retired to the Vistula. As it was, Daun was able to occupy Saxony and to force Dresden and Torgau on the Elbe to capitulate.

Fortunately the success of the English in the West and on the ocean did something to relieve the gloom. In August, Choiseul's attempt to reconquer Hanover was foiled by the victory of Ferdinand of Brunswick over Contades at Minden, a battle in which the English infantry distinguished themselves greatly, while his idea of invading England

CHOISEUL  
SUCCEEDS THE  
ABBÉ BERNIS,  
DEC. 1758

FREDERICK'S  
DEFEAT AT  
KÜNERSDORF,  
AUG. 1759

SUCCESSES OF  
THE ENGLISH  
AT MINDEN  
(AUG. 1759),  
LAGOS, AND  
QUIBERON (NOV.)

was effectually prevented by the victory of Boscawen at Lagos as De la Clue was attempting to unite with the Atlantic fleet at Brest, and by the still more decisive defeat of the Brest fleet by Hawke at Quiberon. Henceforth the English were masters of the sea, and blockaded Toulon, Brest and Dunkirk. Indeed the year 1759 was a year of victory for the English. In September, Quebec fell, and with it Canada was practically lost to France. The island of Guadeloupe and Goree in West Africa were taken, while in the following January the battle of Wandewash ended the French supremacy in the Carnatic.

FALL OF  
QUEBEC,  
SEPT. 1759;  
AND BATTLE  
OF WANDEWASH,  
JAN. 1760

Choiseul, having now tried his best, became convinced of the necessity of peace. Yet Maria Theresa, believing in ultimate success, obstinately refused to consider peace, and in March 1760, concluded a fresh treaty with Elizabeth of Russia, by which East Prussia was promised to Elizabeth in return for further help.

The plan of the Allies was to make a concerted attack on Silesia, Brandenburg and Saxony. Loudoun, a far more active general than Daun, moved into Silesia and won a victory over one of Frederick's lieutenants at Landshut, but was defeated by the Prussian King himself at Liegnitz. In October the Russians, with an Austrian contingent under Lacy, entered Berlin, but on the approach of the Prussians retired across the Oder, and Frederick, displaying his old skill in strategy, turned against Daun who had secured nearly all Saxony. Though suffering great loss he was able by the help of Seidlitz and his cavalry to win a battle at Torgau, which he declared to be the severest in the war. Torgau was the last pitched battle which Frederick ever fought. Fortunately for him his enemies failed to take advantage of his exhaustion to press him hard, and the year 1761 was not marked by any decisive engagement in Germany, though Ferdinand of Brunswick conducted another very successful campaign in the West against greatly superior numbers.

FREDERICK  
WINS BATTLE  
OF LIEGNITZ,  
AUG. 1760

AND TORGAU,  
NOV. 1760

Elsewhere, however, two events had occurred which were

Her first act was to recall the Russian troops, and the hopes of Austria rose. But Catherine had no intention of rejoining the Austrian alliance. She preferred to remain neutral, and await further developments. Frederick was, therefore, able to retake Schweidnitz in October, while Prince Henry of Prussia defeated a mixed Austrian and Imperial army at Freiburg, and Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick was again successful in Western Germany against the French, who here, in the autumn of 1762, failed once more to gain any decisive advantage from their superior numbers.

Nor was France more successful in her struggle with England. Complete masters of the sea, the English had been rapidly reducing the French and Spanish islands. It was evident that, if France and Spain were to retain any, they must treat for peace. Fortunately for them, Chatham was no longer in power, and George III and his new minister, Bute, were willing to come to terms. Accordingly negotiations had been opened in September 1762, which, in November, led to the signing of the preliminaries of peace.

The original cause of the war having thus been settled between them, neither England nor France were much interested in the continental struggle; and Maria Theresa, left practically single-handed, became at last convinced that she must forgo her desire to revenge herself on the Prussian King. Even her demands that she should retain Glatz, and that Saxony should be compensated for her sufferings during the war, were rejected by Frederick. 'Not a foot of land,

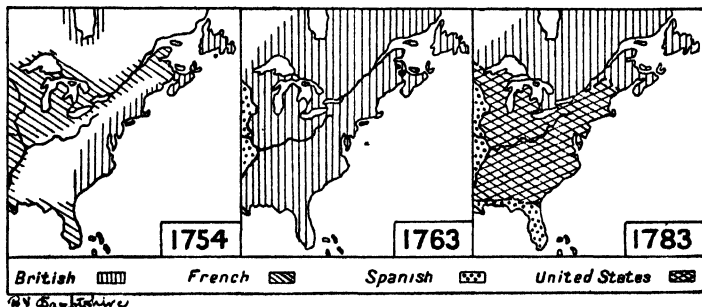
PEACE OF  
HUBERTSBURG,  
AND OF PARIS,  
FEB. 1763

and no compensation to Saxony; not a village, not a penny.' These were his terms, which were finally accepted at Hubertsburg, in Saxony.

So far as Europe was concerned, therefore, that peace made no alteration in distribution of territory. 'A million of men had perished, and yet not a hamlet had changed its ruler.' Nevertheless, the indirect results were far-reaching.

The kingdom of Prussia was finally established as one of the five great Powers, and henceforth almost disputed with

# THE AMERICAN COLONIES





Austria the leadership in Germany. She had, indeed, suffered severely. Her population was thinned, her trade ruined. There were scarce horses enough to plough the land, or enough corn for seed. But the King had escaped debt, and had even money enough in his coffers for another campaign. He now improved his finances, introduced the system of excise—which, however, caused some discontent—and used his great gifts as an administrator so effectively that in seven years all traces of the war had nearly disappeared. From this time forward he abandons the rôle of the warrior, becomes the advocate of peace, especially within the Empire, and when he wishes for aggrandizement, seeks to attain his end by diplomacy.

Austria, indeed, had suffered nearly as much as Prussia from a material point of view. She had, besides, lost credit and the great scheme of Kaunitz had conspicuously failed.

The position of England, so far as Europe is concerned, was not improved. Frederick declared, though with little real justification, that Bute had left him in the lurch in 1762, at the most serious crisis of his fortunes, and scarce consented to continue diplomatic relations. When, therefore, some twenty years later, England was engaged in her great struggle with her American colonies, she not only found France on the side of her rebellious colonists, but had no ally in Europe whom she could use against her. If, however, we turn to the immediate results of the war itself, the gains of England in India and America were great.

PEACE OF PARIS, FEB. 1763 By the Peace of Paris, which was signed at nearly the same moment between England and France and Spain—

1. France ceded the whole of Canada, and Cape Breton in the north, and the following West Indian islands: Grenada, Tobago, Dominica and St. Vincent, as well as Senegal, on the west coast of Africa.

2. The French settlements in India were restored, but no fortifications were to be permitted.

3. Spain ceded Florida to England, but in return received Louisiana from France, which Louis XV, with somewhat misplaced generosity, insisted on giving as a proof of his gratitude to his unfortunate ally.

4. France evacuated the Rhenish provinces of Prussia, being given

back Guadeloupe, Martinique and St. Lucia in the West Indies in exchange.

5. Minorca, which the French had taken in 1756, was exchanged against Belle Isle captured by the English in 1761.

The Seven Years' War may thus be said to have decided that England, and not France, was to be the first colonial Power; that North America was to belong to the Anglo-Saxon race; and that England was to be the ruler of India.

It is generally held that the reason why France was beaten in this great contest was that she had imperative CAUSES OF THE interests in Europe which she could not, or SUCCESS OF would not, neglect; that while her energies ENGLAND IN were thus divided, England, less concerned in AMERICA these questions, could devote herself mainly to AND INDIA the sea, to India and to America, while by preventing the French from conquering Hanover she conquered America in Germany.

The soundness of this contention has already been questioned (cf. p. 147). It was there shown that at the opening of the struggle the navy of France was distinctly inferior to that of England, and the difficulty of recovering that supremacy during the course of a naval war was demonstrated. Here it may be observed that, interesting though the questions may be, whether the French had the desire, or the capacity, to become a great colonizing people, and what the future of these colonies and dependencies might have been if they had not been conquered by England; or again, whether the English or French in America would have won if they had been left alone by the mother country—all these are but the 'might-have-beens' of history. The important fact for us is, that England did win these dependencies by war, and that the success of that war depended mainly upon the sea.

In America, then, France started with this advantage.<sup>1</sup> POSITION OF She had been the first to establish forts in FRANCE AT the disputed territory; she had been most OPENING OF the Indian tribes; her efforts were united, whereas the thirteen THE WAR

<sup>1</sup> For relative position of England and France at this time, cf. p. 142.

English colonies were wanting in harmony and even in devotion to the common cause, and little was to be expected from the weak and timid government of the Duke of Newcastle.

But with the final entrance of William Pitt into the ministry (June 1757) all this was changed. 'England', said Frederick the Great, 'has long been in child-labour, but has at last produced a man.'

CHARACTER  
AND POLICY  
OF PITT

The predominant traits of the great statesman Pitt were his extraordinary energy and his distinguished personality, by which he was able to impart that energy to others. Every one it was said left the presence of Pitt a braver man than when he entered it. If we add to this an insight into character, which never failed him, we shall realize that Pitt was one of the best war ministers that this country has ever seen. No sooner was he in power than the war was pushed with the greatest energy.

Canada was the main objective of England. It was not until an English army under Amherst, assisted by a squadron under Boscowen, had taken Louisbourg, on the island of Cape Breton, that we completely commanded the estuary of the St. Lawrence, and prevented the landing of any further reinforcements from France. To the urgent demand of Montcalm, the French general, the answer henceforth was that it would be useless to send reinforcements, as the English fleet would surely intercept them. In 1759 Saunders' fleet carried Wolfe and his army to the victory on the Heights of Abraham which gave us Quebec, at the cost of Wolfe's life, indeed—a loss which was, however, in some measure balanced by the death of Montcalm as well.

FALL OF  
LOUISBOURG,  
26 JULY, 1758

FALL OF  
QUEBEC,  
13 SEPT., 1759

The English had not finished their task by capturing Quebec. Vaudreuil, the Governor of Canada, still held out at Montreal, and early in 1760, taking advantage of the freezing of the St. Lawrence and the weakness of the English garrison of Quebec, he advanced against that town and was pressing it hard, when the opening of the St. Lawrence to navigation

in the spring allowed relief to reach Quebec, whereupon Vaudreuil had to raise the siege and drop back on Montreal.

AND OF  
MONTREAL,  
SEPT. 1760

Finally, the English converged upon Montreal from Quebec, from the Great Lakes and from Lake Champlain, and Vaudreuil, completely surrounded, had to surrender Montreal, and Canada was ours. Meanwhile, in the West Indies, the English command of the sea allowed our troops to take the French islands one after another and to capture Havana from Spain in 1762.

If we pass to India, we see the same truth illustrated. Indeed, except by some power like Russia, that can attack India from the North, the control of that great continent, if it is to be in the hands of any European Power, must fall to that one who is mistress at sea. Nevertheless it should be remembered that France had thrown away the best chance of an Indian Empire before the Seven Years' War began, and had done this intentionally.

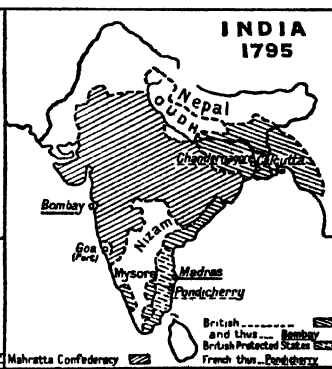
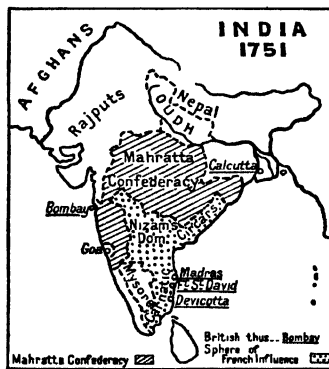
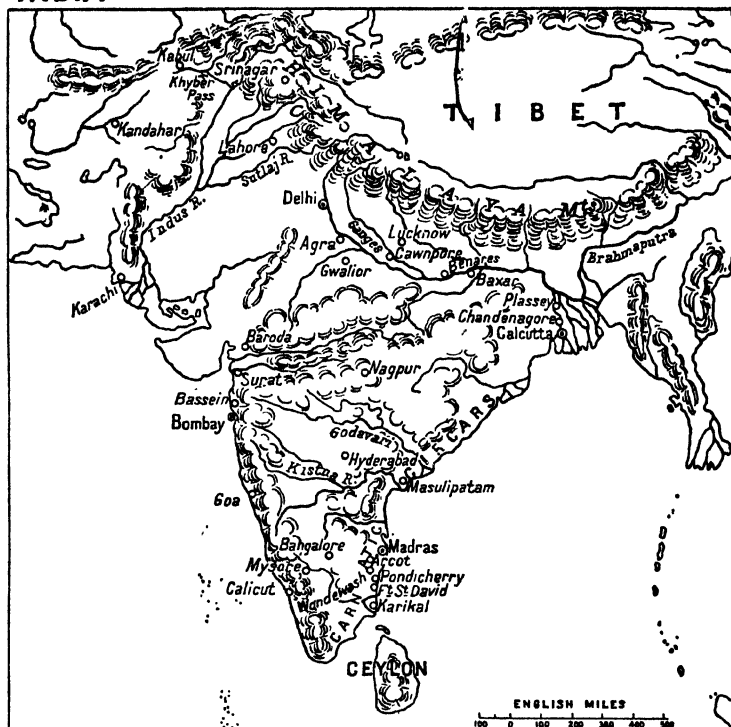
THE FRENCH  
IN INDIA

DUPLEIX,  
1740-1754

The brief history of French predominance in India centres upon one man, Dupleix, who, having risen in the service of the French East India Company, was made Governor-General in 1740. It was Dupleix who first laid down the principles shortly after to be adopted by Clive and later founders of our Empire. First, that a sufficiently large and adequately equipped European force could overcome any number of troops which Indian Princes could put into the field; secondly, that although the native troops were not to be feared when under native command, they could under European discipline and leadership be made most effective; thirdly, that there was no alternative between abandoning the Indian trade altogether and assuming political control, for trade could not live amidst the palace revolutions which were constantly disturbing the numerous native states, both great and small, and amidst the deep-seated corruption which was rife in them.

In vain had Dupleix urged these views both on the Directors of the Company and on the Government. The Company wished for trade and dividends, not for power. 'We do not

# INDIA



Y. G. Banerjee, Oxford, 1908.

need states, but some ports for trade, with a territory two or three leagues in extent, wrote the Directors; and they were supported in their views, not only by the government, but by public opinion. Nor need we be surprised. It was only men who knew India, and who had insight and foresight as well, who saw the matter otherwise, and we may remind ourselves that the opinion of the Directors of our own Company was very much the same, only their hands were forced by a succession of very able and independent Governors-General.

Impressed with these views, the French had at Aix-la-Chapelle surrendered Madras, which Dupleix had won in the war. The subsequent brilliant successes of Dupleix, whereby he made himself master of the Carnatic and of the Deccan, decided the course of the succession, guided the councils of his enemies, and gained for the Company the possession of four great provinces (the Southern Circars), were looked upon askance, and his idea condemned as visionary. When his position was challenged by his great rival Clive, he received but niggard help from home; and when, largely from want of due support, he met with defeat, he was recalled at the suggestion of the English themselves, who declared that his wild ambitions alone prevented the re-establishment of peace. His successor was instructed to share with England the possessions he had acquired, and to enter into a mutual agreement to take no part for the future in the disputes between native Princes (Dec. 1754), a promise which it was impossible to keep. Dupleix suffered most cruelly. The large amount of private money which he had expended in the public cause was never repaid, and, nine years later, he died neglected, saved only by private charity from absolute destitution, in the very year which saw the final overthrow of the French power in India, November 1763.

At the outbreak of the Seven Years' War the French East India Company still held Chandernagore on the Hoogley above Calcutta, and Pondicherry, eighty miles south of Madras; they still were the practical rulers of the Deccan, where Bussy, Dupleix's

DUPLEIX  
RECALLED,  
AUG. 1754

POSITION OF  
FRENCH E.I.  
COMPANY IN  
1756

best general, was in command, and they still had a good naval base in the Isle of France. But the policy adopted by the French Company had ruined their prestige. With their prestige their trade had declined, while the English Company, under the able administration of Clive, was profiting by French supineness. Shortly after the declaration of war, Clive took Chandernagore (March 1757), and thus excluded the French from Bengal. Clive had been brought to Bengal to re-establish the position of the British which had been gravely imperilled by an attack by the Nawab, Siraj ud Daula, who had taken Calcutta in June 1756, the capture being followed by the incident of the 'Black Hole'. Clive had been hurried to Bengal with troops from the other Presidencies, had re-taken Calcutta in January 1757, and forced the Nawab to compensate the Company for its losses and to make other concessions. Shortly after the capture of Chandernagore, however, disputes having arisen over the terms of the treaty, hostilities were resumed, and on June 23 Clive routed the Nawab's army at Plassey, the victory being followed by the establishment of a new Nawab, Mir Jafir, the puppet of the English, who from henceforth were in reality the rulers of Bengal.

The French government, when too late, attempted to do something to undo the past, and dispatched a new force which landed in India in September 1757. But any chance of success, which now was small, was destroyed by the conduct of the government. They did not send the right kind of man, they refused to learn by experience, and the expedition was not properly supported, especially by sea.

The Count de Lally Tollendal, son of an old Jacobite exile, who had taken service in the French army, was very ill-fitted for his task, except for his hatred of England. Although a good soldier, a man of honour and integrity, he was suspicious, bad-tempered and utterly deficient in tact. Ignorant of Indian ways, he soon succeeded in alienating, not only the natives themselves, but his own subordinates, Bussy included, more especially by his

COUNT DE  
LALLY  
TOLLENDAL  
SENT TO INDIA,  
SEPT. 1757

HIS POLICY  
AND CHAR-  
ACTER

well-meaning though ill-timed attempts to do away with the system of corruption which was too prevalent and deep-seated to be cured in the midst of a struggle for existence. The policy dictated to him in his instructions, of which he himself approved, was to expel the English from the Carnatic, so that the French Company might devote itself to trade undisturbed by foreign rivals ; to withdraw French troops from the Deccan ; and to enter into no alliances with native rulers which interfered with the peaceful pursuit of commerce. The last instruction had been adopted in the agreement made in 1754. It had not, however, been kept by the English, and without such alliances the French had little chance of prospering. Nor, as we have said, did the new commander receive adequate support.

His first effort was, indeed, successful. In June 1758, LALLY TAKES FORT ST. DAVID, JUNE 1758 Fort St. David, near Pondicherry, was taken. Immediately afterwards the recall of Bussy from the Deccan was followed, as Bussy predicted, by Salabut, who then ruled as Sabahdar, calling in the English. Clive at once seized the opportunity, and the French influence was destroyed in that province. Obstinate refusing to seek for native support, Lally's hopes of driving out the English from the Carnatic were soon dispelled. In sore need of funds, he attempted to recover the payment of a sum of money owed to the Company by the Rajah of Tanjore. The demand was refused, and when he tried to extort the payment by force, the expedition failed. His attack on Madras was no more successful. The French Government had indeed dispatched a fleet under D'Aché to help him. But the admiral was unenterprising, and after an indecisive engagement with the English fleet, he sailed away to the Isle of France. Even LALLY'S SIEGE OF MADRAS, DEC. 1758-FEB. 1759 then Lally captured part of the town. Had the English not been reinforced the fort itself must have surrendered, but in February 1759, just when the garrison were at the end of their resources, the English fleet arrived, and Lally had no alternative but to raise the siege.

In the following September, D'Aché again appeared.



Though worsted in the battle which ensued with the English fleet under Admiral Pocock, he could still have kept the seas; but, unwilling to risk another engagement, and, as was usual with the French, afraid of the monsoon which usually comes on about that time, he again retired.

Meanwhile Clive was steadily pursuing his course. The native Princes interpreted the French policy of non-inter-  
vention as a sign of weakness, and rallied to the side of the more powerful. Finally, the  
BATTLE OF WANDEWASH, JAN. 1760; LOSS OF PONDICHERRY, JAN. 1761 victory of Sir Eyre Coote over Lally at Wandewash, January 1760, was soon followed by the blockade of Pondicherry by land and by sea, and with the fall of that town in January 1761. Lally and the French army became prisoners of war, and the Carnatic was lost to the French. By the Peace of Paris in 1763 the town of Pondicherry was restored to the French Company, as well as Chandernagore and some other posts, but they were not to be fortified. The Company obtained what they had asked for—the right to trade; but this was of little value. Its prosperity declined. In 1769 the privilege of trading with the French settlements was opened to all French subjects, and shortly afterwards the French East India Company was dissolved. The Company had been founded by Richelieu, had been reorganized by Colbert, and had for a moment been incorporated in Law's great Mississippi Company. It had been, with the establishment of the colonial power of France, one of the most remarkable achievements of the old monarchy of France, and with that colonial empire it fell, as the French monarchy itself was soon to fall.

FINAL RETIRE-  
MENT OF  
FRENCH FLEET

BATTLE OF  
WANDEWASH,  
JAN. 1760; LOSS  
OF PONDICHERRY,  
JAN. 1761

FRENCH  
FINALLY  
LOSE INDIA

## CHAPTER IX

### FIRST PARTITION OF POLAND—GUSTAVUS III AND THE REVOLUTION OF 1772—CLOSE OF THE REIGN OF LOUIS XV

**T**HE Seven Years' War had hardly closed when the death of Augustus II, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, once more attracted the attention of Europe to that ill-fated country. Conditions in Poland had not improved during the reign of the late King. Driven from Saxony during the war, he had taken refuge at Warsaw. But he had neither the desire nor the power to attempt any reform, and the only result of his reign was that Poland fell still more entirely under Russian influence. To increase this influence and to reduce Poland to the condition of a Russian dependency, if not to absorb it, had been for a long time the policy of the Russian Court. Yet Catherine II was fully aware that such a policy would meet with opposition from Frederick the Great, and probably from Austria. She, therefore, thought it more prudent to act with Prussia for the present. Frederick, on his part, was eager for a Russian alliance. His worst defeats in the late war had been inflicted by Russian troops; it had been Peter's accession and changes of policy which had saved him; and he feared Russia more than any other Power at the moment. Accordingly, he gladly accepted the advances of Catherine, and agreed to unite with her in supporting the election of her nominee, Stanislaus Poniatowski, a Polish noble, and once a favourite of the Tzarina. They further engaged to prevent any reform of the constitution which might strengthen the crown or make it hereditary.

DEATH OF  
AUGUSTUS II  
OF POLAND,  
OCT. 1763

France and Austria also had their candidate, but they were not prepared to support him by force of arms. Moreover, the influence of France had been altogether destroyed by the fatuous policy, long indulged in by Louis XV, especially in Polish affairs, of carrying on a system of secret diplomacy behind his ministers and even his mistresses. This course of action had led to strange absurdities and contradictions, and had not unnaturally disgusted the French party in Poland.

Catherine II and Frederick, therefore, had no difficulty in forcing the election of their candidate on the Polish Diet, partly by show of arms, partly by bribes. When the new King dared attempt some reform of the constitution, more especially the abolition of the absurd rule that any member of the Diet could veto any measure by his one vote, his new masters at once intervened. 'It is to your Majesty's interest', said one of Frederick's agents, 'that Poland should remain in its present state of anarchy.' They then proceeded to take up the cause of the 'Dissidents', or dissenters from the orthodox Catholic Church, and demanded that they should be admitted to equal political rights. The demand, cloaked under the pretext of adherence to the ideas now being preached by Voltaire and other leaders of enlightened thought, was really made with the intention of maintaining the anarchy; and, in view of the fact that such religious toleration did not exist elsewhere in Europe, Poland was hardly the country in which to try the experiment.

Nevertheless, the Diet, called in October 1767, was so completely terrorized by the presence of Russian troops that it had no alternative but to comply. The Dissidents were made eligible to all places in the Diet and the Senate; and at the same time it was decided that the Crown should remain elective, and that the constitution should not be reformed. The result, as might have been expected, was the outbreak of civil war, led by the Catholics, who formed the large majority, and by those who saw clearly that their national independence was at

ELECTION OF  
PONIAŹOWSKI,  
7 SEPT., 1764

THE DISSIDENTS  
ADMITTED TO  
POLITICAL  
RIGHTS, OCT.  
1767

OUTBREAK OF  
CIVIL WAR

stake. The Catholic nobles in the south formed the Confederation of Bar, in Podolia. Their standard was a crucifix, and their watchword 'The Virgin Mary', and they obtained secret assistance from the French, who still had hankerings after influence in Polish affairs. Russia at once took up arms; and in pursuing some of the confederates, violated the Turkish frontier in Bessarabia, and burnt the town of Balta.

It happened that the reigning Sultan, Mustapha III, was a man of some energy and of warlike tendencies. He dreaded the increase of Russian influence in Poland, THE TURKS DECLARE WAR, OCT. 1768 and, incited by the French minister, Choiseul, now embraced the cause of the confederates and declared war (Oct. 1768). Catherine II eagerly accepted the challenge. In the campaign which ensued, in the following year, Azof, which had once been in the hands of Peter the Great, was again occupied; the Turks were driven from Moldavia and Wallachia; Bucharest was seized, and the Russians seemed likely to cross the Danube.

A renewed European war now seemed not unlikely. Austria, not unnaturally, viewed the advance of the Russians on the Danube with alarm and began to arm, apparently intending to assist the Turks, and expecting France to take an active part on the side of her ally.

Frederick now found himself in a very awkward dilemma. He was bound by treaty to assist Russia, but he was determined not to be involved in another war; these European complications, however, afforded him an opportunity for fishing in troubled waters and furthering his own interests. His conduct, INTERVIEWS BETWEEN FREDERICK AND JOSEPH, AUG. 1769, SEPT. 1770 is a most masterly piece of diplomatic intrigue.

He first approached Austria. Fortunately for him he had not to deal with Maria Theresa, but with her son, Joseph II, who since the death of his father had become joint ruler with the Empress, 1765, while Kaunitz did not share her feelings of personal animosity against the robber of Silesia. He flattered the old diplomat by praising his State paper, the young man by prophesying for him a great future. He disquieted Joseph on the question of Russian advance, and

it was probably due to his suggestion that Austria, in July 1771, made a secret treaty with Turkey. He then turned to Catherine. He warned her that Austria would, in all probability, resist any further attack on Turkey, and that, exhausted as his country was, he could not give her any material assistance. Finally, he suggested that the three Powers should come to terms over the Turkish question, and take their compensation in Poland.

Catherine would no doubt have preferred to continue the Turkish war, while she gradually prepared the way for the complete absorption of Poland. But she was not prepared to face the danger of war with Austria, and after some hesitation, she complied with Frederick's suggestion. The Treaty of St. Petersburg declared that to put an end to the anarchy in Poland and to satisfy their legal claims, the three Powers decided to annex the following portions of Poland :

TREATY OF ST.  
PETERSBURG,  
AUG. 1772

1. Russia was to take all the country which lay east of the Dwina and the Dnieper.
2. The share of Prussia was to be Polish, or Western Prussia, with the exception of the towns of Danzig and Thorn, and part of Great Poland.
3. To Austria was given most of Red Russia, Galicia, part of Podolia, and the city of Cracow.

The Polish Diet had no alternative but to submit, and Poland lost about one-third of its territory.

The partition of Poland is one of the most shameless acts of an age that was not over-scrupulous. It might possibly have been justified on the grounds that the anarchy in the country formed a constant menace to its neighbours, if Russia and Prussia had not designedly fostered the anarchy and opposed any reform.

It would be unfair to accuse Frederick of having first originated the idea of the partition, for it had often been mooted before. Nevertheless, he first made it a practical question, and he throughout behaved as the Mephistopheles of the plot. His desire to unite the duchy of East Prussia with the rest of his dominions can scarcely be wondered at, yet this does not justify the methods he adopted, and nothing

can exceed the cynicism of his correspondence throughout the affair. The true instinct of Maria Theresa condemned the whole business, but she could not resist the pressure put upon her by Joseph and Kaunitz, especially after the fall of Choiseul had made French intervention most improbable. She thus exposed herself to the gibe of the man she had condemned as a dishonest robber. 'She wept indeed', he said, 'but she took. The Empress Catherine and I are brigands, but how did that pious lady arrange the matter with her confessor?'

If we look to the material benefits, Prussia no doubt gained most, yet by the first and subsequent partitions she lost the protection against Russia, which a strong buffer state would have given. That buffer state has now arisen again, and all that Frederick achieved is undone. Silesia, Danzig, the Polish Corridor have created fresh grievances and fresh injustices, and are amongst the most dangerous of the problems of to-day. But, in the main, these grievances find their source in the original injustices of the partition of Poland, and particularly in the annexation by Frederick of his 'Naboth's Vineyard', West Prussia. Again, it is difficult to see how Austria was strengthened by the acquisition of territory outside her natural frontiers, or the increasing of her non-German population by the addition of a turbulent Slav people. Finally, Catherine would have been wiser if she had refused all ideas of partition, and had worked for a united and a reformed Poland under Russian influence, which some day might have been absorbed. In the event Russian Poland was throughout the nineteenth century one of the most disaffected parts of Europe, and a most serious problem to the Russian Government.

The partition of Poland did not put a stop to the Turkish war. The Russian advance was, however, for a time arrested, partly by the fear of provoking Austrian intervention, partly by Turkish successes, partly by a formidable revolt which broke out among the Cossacks of the Don, a revolt which was chiefly confined to the serfs and was as much against the nobles as against the government. Both Austria and Prussia took advantage of the difficulties of Catherine to 'round

off' their acquisitions in Poland by the seizure of some small districts, while Austria occupied the Bukovina on the north-west frontier of Moldavia. The revolt was put down before the end of the year 1773, and in July 1774 the new Sultan, Abdul Hamid, was fain to accede to the Treaty of Kütchuk Kainardji, in Bessarabia.

1. Russia retained Azof and the north coast of the Black Sea as far as the River Bug.
2. Wallachia and Moldavia and the Greek islands were restored to the Porte, but with stipulations as to their being better governed.
3. Russia obtained the right of free navigation for her merchant ships in Turkish waters.
4. The Christians in Constantinople to be under the protection of Russia.

Thus Russia had at last definitely set her foot on the shores of the Black Sea, while her right of interference in the affairs of Wallachia and Moldavia, and of acting as protector of the Christians in Constantinople, were hereafter to be made an excuse for further claims. Henceforth Russia stands in the somewhat equivocal position of a liberator of the Christian subjects of the Porte, and a destroyer of the independence and liberties of the Christian Polish people.

The policy of Catherine and of Frederick the Great with regard to Poland cannot be excused on the ground of the exceptional character of that country which necessitated their interference, since they had adopted an exactly similar line of conduct with regard to Sweden. Afraid lest a restoration of the power of the Crown in that country might endanger their designs, they had, in 1764 and again in 1769, united in a secret agreement with Denmark to oppose any change of the constitution, and to consider any attempt to restore the unlimited power of the Crown as a sufficient pretext for a war, in which Russia should claim Finland, and Prussia Swedish Pomerania, while Denmark might hold any conquests on the Norwegian frontier which she might make. Frederick himself characteristically warned his sister, who

PROPOSED  
PARTITION OF  
SWEDEN FOILED  
BY GUSTAVUS  
III

was then Queen of Sweden, that in these matters family affection would have to give way to political interests.

Fortunately the old intriguer could not prevent some of his more worthy characteristics from reappearing in his nepl.ew, Gustavus III, who by his ability and energy saved his country from the fate that his uncle was preparing for it. This remarkable young man dreamt of the ancient glories of his country. The history of the last fifty years had shown conclusively the weakness of the aristocratic rule. The factions of the nobles had disgusted many, while their privileges had alienated the support of the peasantry. When therefore Gustavus, a little more than a year and a half after his accession to the throne, carried out a cleverly arranged plot to overthrow the government, he met with much popular support, and the Diet submissively confirmed the alterations in the constitution which Gustavus proposed, and which restored to the Crown many of the prerogatives of which it had been despoiled.

The triumph of the Swedish King, which occurred in the same month as the partition of Poland, was a great blow to the designs of the three Powers. Russia, and even Denmark, thought of effecting by war what they had failed to do by intrigue. But France, which had supported Gustavus with money for his enterprise, now threatened an alliance with the Swedish King. Frederick was determined not to appeal to arms, and Catherine, still encumbered with the Turkish war, and shortly after with a Cossack revolt, thought it wiser to abandon for the present her designs on Sweden. Gustavus had saved his country, and for a brief period under his vigorous though somewhat rash direction, Sweden again played a not unimportant part in the affairs of Europe.

The success of Gustavus, and the support he received from France, did something to improve her position in European politics. Although the *coup d'état* in Sweden had been effected after the fall of Choiseul, it had been prepared with his approval. He therefore gained the credit of it, while his purchase of Corsica from Genoa and its annexation (1768)

THE SWEDISH  
COUP D'ÉTAT,  
AUG. 1772

IMPROVED CON-  
DITION OF  
FRANCE DUE  
CHIEFLY TO  
CHOISEUL



gave France a new naval base in the Mediterranean. At home his administration was one of the best that France had seen, at all events since the fall of Fleury. Having learnt by the experience of the Seven Years' War the importance of the navy, he devoted himself to its improvement, and with such success that, when he fell, it was more nearly equal to that of England than ever before, both in numbers and in efficiency, as was shortly to be seen in the War of the American Independence. Some important reforms were also introduced into the army. Nor were the peaceful interests of the country neglected. Choiseul was the follower of the new school of French economists, who believed that agriculture, manufacture and trade would be more prosperous if freed from government restraint and left to natural laws. Accordingly free commerce in corn within the country was allowed, and free export so long as the price remained below a certain sum. Some of the French colonies were declared free ports, and private trade with India was permitted. The absurd sumptuary law which forbade the use of calico or cotton fabrics, lest the wool trade should be injured, was revoked. These reforms did not, indeed, meet with universal approval, and the edict with regard to the free export of corn was reversed in 1770. Nevertheless the movement was in the right direction, and both agriculture and manufacture made considerable strides. Moreover, after he was in office, the baneful influence of Madame de Pompadour was restrained.

Choiseul, however, was stronger in conception than in execution: he had intelligence, but was inconsequent and thoughtless, and had made many enemies. His luxurious and extravagant habits ill-fitted him for grappling with the financial problem, the real cancer of France, and after his fall (Dec. 1770) the evil was intensified by the reckless policy of the new Comptroller-General, the Abbé Terray. This unprincipled man adopted the policy of the spendthrift. He met current expenses by repudiating or postponing the payment of his debts, a policy which, if it gave momentary relief, only increased the difficulty of borrowing in the future.

CHOISEUL SUC-  
CEDED BY  
DUKE OF  
AIGUILLON, 1770

Meanwhile the government adopted two measures, which, though in themselves capable of defence, had a disastrous effect on its stability. The Jesuits were expelled, and the 'Parlements' overthrown. The first step, though not very eagerly supported by Choiseul, had been acquiesced in by him, the other occurred immediately after his fall.

The expulsion of the Jesuits was not due to any theological controversy, nor was it caused, as it was in Portugal in 1759, THE EXPULSION OF THE JESUITS by their political intrigues. Nevertheless the actual beginning of the quarrel is illustrative of the change which had come over the Society since the days of its original foundation.

Of all the works of the Jesuits, none reflects greater credit upon them than their missionary efforts.

As their missions grew in importance, they, perhaps not unnaturally, betook themselves to trade. After all, their missions required funds, and these their trade gave them. And yet this devotion to trade would have shocked their founder, Ignatius Loyola, and there was great danger lest the religious fervour of the missionary should be thereby impaired.

In any case, the jealousy of the merchants is not to be wondered at, and, in consequence of their complaints, the government ordered Lavalette, the Superior of the mission at Martinique, to refrain from further trade. Unfortunately for the society, Lavalette neglected the injunction. Shortly after, at the commencement of the Seven Years' War, a large consignment of goods was seized by English cruisers. Lavalette had borrowed money on these goods, and when the payment became due, the French merchants, on whom the claim fell and to whom the goods had been consigned, were unable to meet the demand and became bankrupt. The creditors forthwith attempted to recover the debt from the Society in France itself. The Jesuits declared that the commercial transactions of Lavalette were none of their business, and declined to accept the responsibility, but lost their case before the Consular Court at Marseilles. The Society might have appealed to the Great Council, where they would have been more likely to obtain a favourable

verdict. Instead of that they laid their case before the 'Parlement' of Paris.

The step was a fatal one. Not only were the lawyers who composed that body actuated by the usual jealousy of one privileged body for another, but the 'Parlement' had long been engaged in attempting to resist the claim of the Jesuits to forbid the sacraments and the right of burial by the Church to all Jansenists. Their judges, therefore, were by no means impartial. The question to be decided was whether the whole Society was responsible for debts contracted in trade by a Superior of one of its branches. To help them in their decision, the 'Parlement' demanded to see the rules of the Society, and having read them, they not only affirmed the judgment of the Consular Court, but declared that many of the regulations of the Jesuits contravened the fundamental principles of Christian society; proceeded to forbid Frenchmen to enter the Order, and declared all schools under its control closed. The decision met with much approval, more especially among the middle classes, with whom the Jesuits had never been popular, while Choiseul, who disliked the Society on account of its intervention in politics, advised compliance. The weak King, after a vain attempt to prevail

JESUITS SUP-  
PRESSED IN  
FRANCE, 1767

upon the Jesuits to modify their rules, more especially with regard to the unlimited powers of their General, a demand which was met by the famous answer, 'Sint ut sunt aut non sint',<sup>1</sup> bowed before public opinion and suppressed the Order in France, 1767.

The action of France must not be looked upon as an isolated event. Portugal had given the lead, and the example was shortly followed by most Roman Catholic countries,

CLEMENT XIV  
ABOLISHES THE  
JESUITS, JULY  
1773

and though the existing Pope in vain attempted to save the Society, his successor, Clement XIV, finally consented to abolish it altogether.<sup>2</sup>

The suppression of the Jesuits is therefore of the greatest significance, not only in France but in Europe. Founded to combat the Reformers in the sixteenth century, they had

<sup>1</sup> 'The Society shall remain as it is or cease to exist.'

<sup>2</sup> The Society was again restored by Pius VII in 1814.

taken the leading part in restoring the fortunes of the Papacy, and since then had deeply influenced the policy of all the Catholic Powers. Few religious orders have done a greater work, none have met with greater obloquy. The question as to their influence or morality has already been discussed (cf. p. 58). Here it must suffice to indicate the importance of their suppression in the history of France. The French Government, since the death of Louis XIV, had not indeed identified itself so closely with the Jesuits as had been the case elsewhere, and in the controversy between the Society and the Jansenists, which disturbed the reign of Louis XV, though it generally inclined to the Jesuit cause, had been vacillating. That the Crown should take so extreme a step as to expel the Jesuits, and this chiefly because it dared not or cared not to resist popular clamour, well illustrates the decline of the royal authority, the growing strength of public opinion, and of the spirit of change.

The Crown had destroyed one of the old institutions of the country, its next step was to overthrow a still older one, that of the Parlements. The relations between the Government and the 'Parlement' of Paris had been more or less strained throughout the reign of Louis XV. It had opposed the financial schemes of Law; it had fought the cause of the Jansenists, and it had just forced the Crown to expel the Jesuits. It now proceeded to protest against the financial schemes of the Abbé Terray. Finally, in 1770, it took up the cause of the Provincial 'Parlement' of Brittany, which had opposed the collection of a tax imposed by the Governor, the Duke d'Aiguillon, and accused him of tyranny and corruption. D'Aiguillon was, however, in high favour at Court and in league with Terray and the Chancellor, Maupeou, and between them they not only induced the King to take decisive action against the Parlements, but to dismiss Choiseul (Dec. 1770), who was their most influential supporter. The King reprimanded the Parlement of Paris for having at various times interfered in matters outside its province, and 'of having put itself beside, and even above, the royal power', and ordered that all joint action between the local 'Parlements'

THE ABOLITION  
OF THE 'PARLE-  
MENTS', 1771

and that of Paris should cease. In answer to this royal injunction the 'Parlement' of Paris declined to carry on its judicial work, and closed the courts.

It happened that Maupeou, the Chancellor at the time, belonged to an old parliamentary family, and that he had himself once been the President of the 'Parlement'. Possibly the judges counted on his support and hoped that the struggle would, as often before, end in a compromise. But they had mistaken their man. After a fruitless attempt to obtain the submission of individual members, Maupeou took the 'Parlement' at its word. It was declared abolished. The members were deprived of their offices, though with some compensation, and they were exiled to various parts of the country. A like fate overcame the local 'Parlements'. A new system of courts was established, which were strictly confined to judicial work. The judges were appointed with fixed salaries and the system of purchase was done away with. This bold step met with approval from a few of the most intelligent, and among them Voltaire. It cannot be denied that the whole position and character of the 'Parlements' was illogical, and really incompatible with a well-organized government. They were a strange survival of the past. That justice should be administered by a practically hereditary body was a system unknown elsewhere in Europe at the time. Their claim to approve of royal edicts, that is, to share in the power of legislation, was anomalous. Nor had they always exercised their powers well. The justice they administered was often partial, cruel and unjust; witness the case of the unfortunate Huguenot, Calas, who was condemned by the 'Parlement' of Toulouse to be broken on the wheel on the charge of having murdered his son because he wished to become a Roman Catholic—a charge which was subsequently declared to be unfounded, mainly thanks to the agitation courageously inspired by Voltaire, though, true, from the security of the Swiss border—or of the even more shocking case of La Barre. Their opposition to the royal edicts had often been wrong, especially on matters which touched the privileges of their members in regard to taxation. That the confusion between the legislative and

judicial functions should cease was highly desirable, and the abolition of the system of purchase was a great reform in itself. Something, too, was done to redistribute the areas over which the jurisdiction of the 'Parlement' of Paris ran, so that litigants should no longer be forced to come to Paris from distant provinces. Maupeou, indeed, wished to follow up the change with further alterations; to establish a uniform and simple system of civil and criminal law in the place of the old, which was full of intricacies and contradictions; and to introduce a more equitable system of procedure. These ideas he was never able to carry out. Nevertheless, the changes he did effect were good in themselves, and might have been successful if they had been followed by a radical reform of the whole government of the country, and by the substitution of a constitutional system in the place of autocratic despotism. But this neither Maupeou nor the King proposed. This exceptional act of authority was accompanied by an assertion of the irresponsibility of the monarch to any one but God; words which came ill from the lips of one who used his divine power so badly, and which alienated a public opinion which was already being influenced by the writings of Rousseau and other liberal authors. The Crown had shown that the old institutions were no longer necessary, and people began to ask whether the whole system itself was worth preserving. From this moment the cry for the revival of the States-general was often heard.

On the other hand, the supporters of the monarchy itself were indignant at the attack on a privileged and ancient institution. The new courts were virulently abused. It was difficult to find competent men to fill the vacant seats, and any hope that time would remedy these difficulties was destroyed by Louis' successor. One of the first but most unwise acts of Louis XVI was to restore the 'Parlements' (1774). Any good results that might have followed were thrown away, and the whole affair only served to weaken still further the royal prestige, which had already fallen sufficiently low.

Three years afterwards Louis XV died a victim to small-

pox, and thus closed an inglorious reign of fifty-nine years. DEATH OF LOUIS XV, MAY 1774 His character as a man and as a King was contemptible. He was easy-going, good-natured, and even generous when it cost him little; but, as is so often the case, this good-nature was really a form of selfishness. The private morality of princes has rarely been high, but there are few Kings who have been so fickle in their 'amours', while the contradiction between his shameful life and his professions of religious devotion bring despair to the pious, and, not unnaturally, are made use of by all enemies of religion.

Nor was Louis XV any better as a King. Timid and afraid of opposition, he either allowed his mistresses to usurp his place, as was the case with Madame de Pompadour, or was in the hands of the minister of the moment. Devoid of courage to oppose them openly, he resorted, as already mentioned, to an absurd system of secret diplomacy behind their backs, which thwarted them at every turn, and if he interfered it was generally to dismiss the minister at the dictation of some mistress or of some court favourite. Hence the weakness and the inconsistencies of French government and diplomacy during his reign, and the disasters of the Seven Years' War, when France lost her position in the Old World and failed to hold her own in the New. No King ever spent so much public money on his mistresses, and that at a time when the country was face to face with bankruptcy.

One would have expected that, under these circumstances, the reign would have closed in gloom. Yet it has been well observed that, on the contrary, the country was full of hope. Two facts explain this apparent contradiction. In spite of the hopeless condition of the public finances, the material prosperity of the people was advancing. Manufactures and trade had increased, and the middle classes were in a much better plight than they had been at the beginning of the century. Meanwhile the advance of science had shown the possibilities of the future, and the power of man over the material universe; while a new school of writers were preaching the doctrine of the perfectibility of man, and attributing the evils and the misery which assailed him to faults of an

artificial civilization and of a bad government, faults which they rather pathetically averred could easily be cured.

The rise of this new school of political philosophers may be traced back to the days of the Regent and the relaxation from the stern control of Louis XIV, though it had its origin in England (p. 106). It reached its culmination in the latter years of the reign of Louis XV, and continued right into the Revolution. As d'Alembert himself prophesied, it was, indeed, destined to mark an epoch, not only in the history of France, but of all Europe and, in fact, of mankind.

In 1751 Diderot published the first volume of his famous Encyclopædia, or *Universal Repertory of Human Knowledge*. This monumental work, to which all the leading writers of the day contributed articles, including d'Alembert, who was for many years joint Editor with Didcot, took twenty-one years to complete (1751-1772), and consisted of twenty-one volumes of text and four of supplementary matter. Many of the articles were definitely anti-religious and free-thinking in tone, and publication was frequently suspended by the order of the King, who detested it. It was severely practical in aim. 'Reason' alone must prevail, and in his Preface Diderot explains that 'the only knowledge worthy of the name is that which leads to some new and useful invention, which will teach man to do something better and with less trouble and quicker than before'.

The Encyclopædists were of very different origins, Montesquieu being an aristocrat; Diderot almost a peasant; d'Alembert, the natural son of Mme de Tencin, the presiding genius over one of the most popular of the Salons of Paris; and they held different and even opposing views, some being Deists and others frankly Atheists, and were jealous and quarrelsome amongst themselves, but they were all united on the side of 'Reason', of love of Humanity, and respect for the individual and his 'natural' rights. They believed in the original goodness of man, and his perfectibility; and expected, through 'Reason', the discovery of a political and social science which would give the world a just, 'fraternal' and happy society. Thus Holbach declared 'Reason is the know-



ledge of happiness'; Diderot, 'If the laws are good, habits are good'; and Helvetius, 'The good law makes the good citizen'.

While Montesquieu (cf. p. 101), Diderot and d'Alembert perhaps played as great a rôle in the remarkable revolution in men's minds which swept with ever-increasing velocity over France and then over the civilized world—its two great symbolic figures are, of course, Voltaire and Rousseau. These two men were poles apart and disliked each other's views, but their combined influence on the public opinion of the day was overwhelming. Of Voltaire something has already been said (cf. p. 102); with advancing years he became less of the literary man and the playwright, and more of the pamphleteer and publicist, though his pamphlets often bore the guise of moral tales. For all that, his original training as a pupil in a Jesuit school was still an influence with him, he remained a classic and of the eighteenth century; while Rousseau, who had but little education, was a romantic, and seems as if he should really have belonged to the early nineteenth century. Voltaire, who hated oppression and superstition and the priesthood ('écrasez l'infame'), was for all that a finished man of the world. He expressed his views with clarity, wit, and polish, and was noted for his cynical and distinctive force. Like a true Frenchman, everything about him was rapier-like, swift and bright, and he is admirable reading to this day. Like a true Frenchman, too, he was fond of money, made many successful speculations, and at Ferney ran a prosperous stud, and a watch and clock factory, besides a considerable village silk-industry. Though a reformer, and of the middle class by origin, he remained an aristocrat at heart, a Conservative and a monarchist. Rousseau, on the other hand, the son of a poor working watch-maker, scorned, or professed to scorn, society, and did in fact spend much of his life as a recluse. A Swiss and originally a Calvinist, he was a man of the people and a republican, and his writings are much more in the popular style and appealed to sentiment more than to argument. Though he rose to great heights of eloquence, that eloquence is rather turgid, and he is much less easily read to-day.

Yet of the two writers Rousseau probably made the most powerful impression upon his contemporaries, and certainly left the most lasting results behind him. Not only was he the inspiration of the most violent of the Jacobins in the Revolution, but he may be said to be the father of modern Communism. This was partly because, as contrasted with the ever-sneering Voltaire, he wrote with real passion and sincerity, and partly because all Utopias make a formidable appeal to suffering humanity. And Utopias they were—primitive man the ideal, 'Nature made man happy and good—it is Society which has deprived him and made him miserable.' Science and the Arts 'are born of superstition, curiosity and lies, they have created luxury and divided society into idle rich and starving poor'—'We want liqueurs for our table, that is why the peasant has no wine; we want powder for our wigs and the peasant must go without bread.' Or again: 'The first man who enclosed a parcel of land and said "This is mine" and found others blind enough to believe him, was the real founder of Society.' In *Émile* he preaches the very modern doctrine of reading without tears, in the *Nouvelle Héloïse* the virtues of primitive motherhood, the ladies of society read his book with passionate enthusiasm, while suckling their infants in public. Finally, in *The Social Contract*, the most famous of all his works, he declares that 'all government founded on force is illegitimate—the general will is sovereign.'

Much of all this was paradoxical, as Rousseau's own life was paradoxical—the author of *Émile*, the great educationist, and of the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, abandoned his five children to the Enfants Trouvés. He did not seriously propose that man should return to savagery, or as Voltaire put it, 'go about on all fours', he even held that democracy was only suitable for very small communities—he wanted to return to sanity, purity and gravity, but he had no plan, only dreams; he was carried away by his romanticism and by his eloquence—as Madame de Staël, although a passionate admirer, put it, 'he discovered nothing but he inflamed everything.' Fortunately for him he did not live to witness the terrible errors that were committed by his disciples when they tried to

give concrete reality to his dreams, and were not content, as most of the leaders of the philosophic movement were, to accommodate themselves somehow to life as they found it, while counting upon progress and the growth of enlightenment in the end to make away with abuses. The philosophic movement was full of danger to the monarchy and to the privileged orders. The monarchy had lost its popularity, and absolutism was no longer considered necessary, as it had been in the days of Louis XIV. The government itself had destroyed old institutions, the Jesuits and the 'Parlements'. Why, people began to ask, should not the government itself be altered? At the same time, the position of the privileged orders was exciting discontent among the middle classes. The privileged orders had ceased to take any effective part in the government of the country. They were no longer feared, while they were hated and viewed with increasing jealousy.

Meanwhile, the writings of the philosophers spread everywhere, and opposed to the old world of Church and State, united and intolerant, to popular fanaticism, and to a pedantic and cruel judiciary, the ideas of tolerance, liberty and humanity.

## CHAPTER X

### JOSEPH II

**O**F all the enlightened despots of the eighteenth century no one furnishes a more interesting or more instructive example than Joseph II. 'I have made Philosophy the legislator of my Empire. Her logical principles shall transform Austria.' Inspired with these ideas, Joseph proposed to do away once for all with the infinite variety which was the essential characteristic of the Habsburg dominions; to fuse the different nationalities into one centralized State; to establish a uniform system of justice; and to grant intellectual freedom and religious toleration, while at the same time he overthrew privilege and reduced society to a condition of social and political equality beneath a despotic Crown, devoted to its welfare. The Church should also be freed from the interference of the Pope and subordinated to the civil authority.

POLICY OF  
JOSEPH II

His foreign policy was marked by the same thoroughness. Recognizing that the Netherlands were of little value, he was willing to abandon them, or use them for the purposes of exchange, while he devoted his attention to the extension of his territories in other directions. Bavaria added to Austria would form a strong nucleus of German-speaking people. The acquisition of the lands of Venice should unite the Milanese with this centre, and also give him Istria and the Dalmatian coast, and thus secure a strong position on the Upper Adriatic. To these possessions, Montenegro, Herzegovina, Bosnia, and part of Servia, taken from the Turks, should be added. Thereby he would gain a strong footing in the Balkan Peninsula, while the conquest of Widdin,

Orsova, and part of Wallachia would secure the Lower Danube and perhaps prepare the way for some day holding the mouth of that great river. These views on home and foreign politics were not new. They had often floated before the eyes of Austrian statesmen during the eighteenth century. Prince Eugène had advocated the extension of the Austrian power down the Danube; under Maria Theresa reforms had been effected in the direction of simplicity and unity (cf. p. 139). But no one had ever pushed the ideas so far, or conceived the possibility of carrying them out in the space of one lifetime.

Joseph had been acknowledged Emperor on his father's death in 1765, and since then had been co-regent with his mother in Austrian lands. As long, however, as Maria Theresa lived, he was prevented from embarking fully on his internal reforms. The first partition of Poland had been his first venture in foreign politics. Here the gains of Austria had been small compared with those of Russia and of Prussia. Joseph, therefore, eagerly seized the next opportunity which arose to pursue his aims. In December 1777, Maximilian

DEATH OF  
MAXIMILIAN  
JOSEPH,  
ELECTOR OF  
BAVARIA, DEC.  
777

Joseph, the last of the Bavarian branch of the Wittelsbach family, died. According to an old agreement, the Electorate was to pass to the elder branch which ruled in the Palatinate, then represented by Charles Theodore, who had no children. Joseph had married the daughter of the late elector of Bavaria, probably with an idea of strengthening his claim. She, however, died of smallpox in 1761. He therefore now advanced claims to most of Bavaria. Charles Theodore, a worthless Prince, who had no mind for anything beyond luxury and sports, acquiesced on condition that the rest of the country should be guaranteed to him, and Joseph marched troops into Bavaria. Success seemed assured. Joseph had, however, forgotten Frederick the Great. The old King had said long ago that Joseph was a young man whom it was necessary to watch. He was not, therefore, unprepared, and forthwith approached Charles of Zweibrücken, nephew and heir of Charles Theodore, who dispatched a protest to the Diet, while Frederick moved troops into

Bavaria. Austria at once called on France to carry out the terms of the old Treaty of Versailles, only to be disappointed. Vergennes, now Foreign Minister in place of d'Aiguillon, was already fully occupied in supporting the American colonies in their struggle against England, and pointed out that, by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, France was only bound to aid Austria to retain her old possessions. Maria Theresa CONFERENCE AND PEACE OF TESHEN, MARCH-MAY 1779 had meanwhile invoked the mediation of Russia, and it was Catherine whose voice was really decisive at the conference which was held at Teschen in Austrian Silesia, and decided that-

Joseph should obtain the Quarter of the Inn, that is, the country from Passau, between the Danube, the Inn, and the Salza, some one-sixteenth of Bavaria, while the rest was to pass to Charles Theodore.

By this treaty, then, Joseph only gained a fragment of what he had desired, while the union of the Palatinate with the rest of Bavaria made that Electorate more powerful than before. The Peace of Teschen had, however, other important results. Joseph became convinced of the uselessness of the French alliance, and began to look to Catherine of Russia, who had in the late conference for the first time established her claim to act as an arbiter in the politics of Western Europe.

In the following year Maria Theresa died at the age of sixty-four and after a reign of forty years. Maria Theresa DEATH OF MARIA THERESA, NOV. 1780 is one of the few sovereigns of the eighteenth century on whose memory it is really pleasant to dwell. She had guided her country through a most critical period. Coming to power as an untried young woman of twenty, she had, largely owing to the influence of her personality, saved Austria from dismemberment during the war of the Austrian Succession, and left it unimpaired, save by the loss of Silesia and Parma, and strengthened by the reforms she had introduced.

Although superior in ability and in character to her husband, she never showed that she realized his inferiority, and retained her deep affection for him to the last. Though not exactly great, she was a noble character. At the same

time, in the obstinate tenacity with which she nursed her desire to recover Silesia, in her refusal to dismiss her old, though somewhat incapable, statesmen and generals, and in her real love of making matches for her daughters,<sup>1</sup> we note a certain subordination of policy to sentiment, which is perhaps peculiarly, though not exclusively, a feminine weakness.

Yet, if she had foibles, that is merely to say that she was thoroughly human. If she erred sometimes, she was not dishonest or mean. She objected, though in vain, to the partition of Poland, and to the later Bavarian policy of her son. Though there was no loss of affection between mother and son, her latter years were disturbed by constant differences on State matters, and by fears of the dangers which his rash policy might bring on her country.

By the death of his mother, Joseph became sole ruler of the Austrian dominions, and was free to pursue his schemes. The old minister Kaunitz, always rather a visionary himself, submitted to his masterly will, and confined himself to advice, which was not always followed.

Few of Joseph's internal reforms survived him. It will, therefore, suffice if we treat them very lightly. The German lands, including Hungary and the Netherlands, were divided into thirteen 'Governments', each with a military commander, and two courts of justice—one for the nobles, the other for the commoners, with an appeal to the Supreme Court at Vienna, and also with an administrative council. These councils were formed of officials nominated by and under the control of the central offices at Vienna, which were left untouched. Each 'Government' was divided into circles, and under the circles stood the towns and villages. The meetings of the 'Estates', or Diets, became purely formal, or were omitted altogether; from them, however, were elected two representatives as advisers to the 'Government' in financial matters.

<sup>1</sup> The marriages of her daughters, except that of Christina, the wife of Albert of Saxony, were unfortunate. Caroline, the wife of Ferdinand of Naples, was very unhappy; and Marie Antoinette, wife of the unfortunate Louis XVI, was guillotined during the French Revolution.

The Church was placed under State control. No Papal bull was to be admitted without the Emperor's consent. Some bishoprics were suppressed, the revenues of others cut down: the bishops were to be nominated by the Emperor. Side altars and emblems which savoured of superstition were removed from the churches, and the service books altered by Imperial command. Many monasteries and convents were abolished; those that remained were placed under the authority of the bishops, and devoted to useful works. The Church schools for secular priests were replaced by State seminaries; and for the laity primary education, compulsory, but free, was enforced. Civil and political rights, as well as freedom of worship, were conceded to members of all religions. A universal tax of 13 per cent. was imposed on all lands in the hands of clergy or laity, noble or peasant, without distinction. Lastly, the position of the serfs was ameliorated; they were allowed to marry without their lord's consent; they were secured in the possession of their land, which they now might sell; and their labour services were to be commuted for fixed money payments.

The unification of the kingdom, the subordination of all provincial or class interests to the welfare of the State, these are the main principles of the reforms. No one can dispute that the aim of Joseph was a good one, or that many of these changes were in themselves desirable. In their general features they resemble the reforms attempted by every enlightened despot of the age, and they should more especially be compared with those carried out so successfully by Frederick William I in Prussia (cf. p. 121). It is possible to argue that, as was the case with Prussia, Austria was not ready for constitutional representative governments, and that the local 'Estates' or Diets were not worth preserving. A statesman, however, has to deal with possibilities. He should remember the strength of selfish interests, of national and class prejudices, of custom hallowed by time, all of which such reforms assailed. He should realize the difficulty of finding men as self-sacrificing, as industrious, and as intelligent as himself to work the new machinery.

Unfortunately, it was here that Joseph, like many an



idealist before him, failed. He had not the gift of realizing the feelings of those with whom he had to deal, nor even of securing the confidence of his subordinates. When once convinced of the justice of a measure, no motive of prudence restrained him. Any opposition he treated as if it were a personal matter, and any delay on the part of his subordinates he attributed to apathy or to idleness.

No doubt Joseph was influenced by the success which had attended the reforms in Prussia, but he forgot that the circumstances were different. As we now see, the Habsburgs never succeeded in Germanizing the various nationalities over which they ruled, nor in establishing complete unity. Surely, then, the attempt to do this in a lifetime was a dangerous experiment.

The opposition was greatest in the Netherlands and in Hungary. In the Netherlands the privileges, which dated from mediaeval times, had been confirmed by charter, had survived the Spanish domination, and had been guaranteed by the Habsburgs when they acquired these provinces at the Peace of Utrecht. As for Hungary, she looked upon herself as an independent nation, only connected with the rest of the Austrian territories through the ruler, who, as her King, had made a personal contract with her. In these two countries, therefore, Joseph affronted not only religious feelings and class prejudices, but the spirit of nationality. Since, however, the reforms were not all introduced at the same moment, and discontent takes time to organize itself, Joseph was able to neglect the opposition which was aroused, and meanwhile to pursue his foreign policy.

Joseph entertained two alternative views with regard to the Netherlands—either to knit them more closely with his southern dominions by forming them into one of the thirteen 'Governments', or to exchange them for Bavaria. In any case it would be well to increase their importance, while he freed himself from the irksome burden of the Barrier Treaty.<sup>1</sup> If they were to continue to belong to Austria, she would thus gain; if not, their improved condition would make them a better

POLICY TO-  
WARDS THE  
NETHERLANDS  
AND HOLLAND

southern dominions by forming them into one of the thirteen 'Governments', or to exchange them for Bavaria. In any case it would be well to increase their importance, while he freed himself from the irksome burden of the Barrier Treaty.<sup>1</sup> If they were to continue to belong to Austria, she would thus gain; if not, their improved condition would make them a better

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 55.

equivalent for Bavaria. As England was at this time engaged in her struggle with her American colonies, and at war with the Dutch over the question raised by the Armed Neutrality (cf. p. 202), Joseph did not expect to be opposed by either of these Powers.

In November 1781, therefore, he demanded that the Dutch should evacuate the barrier fortresses. 'As France was now the ally of Austria', he said, 'they were no longer needed.'

On the Dutch complying, he extended his demands. He first asked that they should cede Maestricht (May 1784) and then withdrew this request, on condition that the Scheldt should be declared open, and trade with the East Indies permitted, and in August 1784, ordered Austrian ships to enter the river. The Dutch had, however, now made peace with England (Jan. 1783), and had therefore their hands free to resist. 'They will not fire,' Joseph said to Kaunitz, who had warned him of the danger of his high-handed conduct. 'Sire, they have fired,' was the laconic reply.

Joseph now hoped for the support of Catherine and of France. The former, indeed, wrote on his behalf to the Dutch, but Vergennes, the French Foreign Minister, anxious to retain the friendship of the Dutch, actually threatened to oppose Joseph in arms, while he offered to mediate. Joseph now realized that the game was up, and accepted the offer of Vergennes.

Foiled in this direction, Joseph now turned to his second idea, that of exchanging the Netherlands for Bavaria. Charles Theodore was not popular among his new subjects and as before, in the matter of the Bavarian Succession, was compliant. Catherine of Russia, who had just been supported by Joseph in her annexation of the Crimea (Jan. 1784) and wished for his alliance against the Turk, favoured the project. Vergennes Joseph hoped to have conciliated by his concessions over the Scheldt, and the French minister, thinking that the Netherlands, in less powerful hands than those of Austria, would fall under French tutelage, at first acquiesced.

Here, however, Joseph was to be once more thwarted by the Prussian King. Frederick had viewed with some dismay

the growing friendship between Catherine and Joseph. Since the Seven Years' War he had clung to the Russian alliance. He was now in danger of being isolated in Europe. But he still had influence in Germany, and the acquisition of Bavaria by Austria he was determined to prevent. Accordingly he again stirred up Charles of Zweibrücken, the heir of Theodore, who forthwith declared that he would rather be buried under the ruins of Bavaria than comply. Frederick then turned to the German Princes, who were disturbed at the ambitious schemes of Joseph, and formed with their assistance 'The League of the Princes'.<sup>1</sup> The

THE LEAGUE OF THE PRINCES', JULY 1785 objects of the League were declared to be the maintenance of the integrity of the Imperial constitution, and of the respective States of which it was composed, against the revolutionary policy of the Emperor. As neither Russia nor France would help him with arms, Joseph had no alternative but to withdraw, and to abandon, though with regret, his favourite project. Eventually, by the Treaty of Fontainebleau (Nov. 1785) he withdrew his demands, in exchange for a sum of money, which France, anxious for a settlement in part provided, together with some readjustment of the frontier of Brabant.

Some of the smaller members of the League were anxious to seize this opportunity for reorganizing and reforming the Empire. But this was distasteful to the more powerful Princes, who feared the loss of their independence, and Germany had to be taught the necessity of greater unity by the agonies of the Napoleonic tyranny. The League, it is true, strengthened the position of Prussia, and, had it lasted, might have given her the leadership of Northern Germany. This was prevented by the death of Frederick himself; and with his death the League fell to pieces.

Frederick has, not unnaturally, gained his chief reputation as a soldier. Yet it is a mistake to look upon him as one who

<sup>1</sup> The chief members of the League were Prussia, Saxony, George III as Elector of Hanover, Charles of Zweibrücken, the Archbishop of Mayence, and Charles Augustus of Weimar.

delighted in war. He thought Silesia necessary for the strengthening of his kingdom, he therefore seized it and refused to surrender it. „Hence the two long wars which mark his reign. From that moment he had avoided war. He became the man of peace and the diplomat. At home he devoted himself to the development of his kingdom, while he beguiled his leisure moments with literary productions. For Frederick's verses little can be said, and if his quarrels and reconciliations with Voltaire are amusing, they are very petty and do not add to the reputation of either. In all other respects Frederick, though not a noble character, well deserves his title of 'the Great'. As a soldier he had no rival in his day. A moralist may well take exception to the methods of his diplomacy, but of their cleverness there can be no doubt ; his success in developing the material prosperity of his subjects and the efficiency of the Prussian State cannot be disputed. He not only made Prussia one of the foremost Powers of Europe, he also left her prosperous. His father had reorganized the government, and in that direction he had little to do, but in all his work he displayed those gifts of practical statesmanship which were so conspicuously absent in Joseph II. In one way only did he fail to provide for the future. The fault in the system established by the Great Elector, Frederick's father, lay in the fact that its successful working depended on the character of the ruler. As long as Frederick lived to control and guide, all went well. But he was followed by weaker Kings, and the whole machinery of government fell into confusion. Prussia had yet to undergo a period of humiliation and see her very existence threatened at the hands of Napoleon I, a greater, though not a better man, than Frederick himself.

Frederick William II was in every way a contrast to his uncle, whom he succeeded. The predominant feature of Frederick's character was common sense ; his nephew was a sentimentalist. Frederick had scoffed at religion, yet preserved an outward decency of life ; his nephew was a curious mixture of superstition and sensuality. Frederick had never allowed any one to guide his policy ; his successor fell under the influences of

CHARACTER OF  
FREDERICK  
WILLIAM II

mistresses and spiritual advisers. That under these circumstances his policy at home and abroad should have been weak and unstable can cause no wonder. And yet the first venture of the new King in foreign politics met with a certain measure of success.

In the year 1786, the quarrel between the Burgher party and that of the Stadholder in Holland, which had long been smouldering, broke out afresh. The Stadholder, William V,  
 FREDERICK WILLIAM II RE- was deprived of his office of Captain-General,  
 STORES THE and still his opponents continued their attack.  
 STADHOLDER, It had been the traditional policy of the  
 AND FORMS THE Burgher party to lean on France, and since  
 TRIPLE ALLI- the war with England (1780-1783), English  
 ANCE, 1788 influence in Holland had been undermined by the French  
minister Vergennes. When, therefore, in June 1788, the  
Princess Wilhelmina, wife of the Stadholder and sister of  
the Prussian King, was refused entrance into Holland by  
the agents of the burghers, and when Frederick William  
utilized this sensational affair as a pretext for armed inter-  
vention, he received the cordial support of England. The  
result was the accordance of full satisfaction to the Princess  
and a great increase in the powers of the Stadholder. France,  
 deprived of the leadership of Vergennes (he had died in  
 February 1787), and already on the verge of the Revolution,  
 was in no position to interfere, and Frederick William suc-  
ceeded in forming a Triple Alliance with England and the  
Stadholder. By this alliance the influence of England in  
Holland was restored; England and Prussia were again in  
alliance; England was no more isolated in Europe, and a  
league had been made which promised well for the future.  
 The Prussian King had, however, gained too easy a  
 success. He looked upon himself as the arbiter of Europe,  
 and attempted to play a rôle for which he was not well  
 fitted.

On the death of Frederick, Joseph had thoughts of seeking the alliance of Prussia. 'Such an alliance', he said, 'would astonish Europe and excite the admiration of our subjects.' The help of Prussia might be gained to quell the disturbances which his reforms had caused, more especially in the Nether-

lands, and, with Prussia as his ally, he need fear no possible combination against him. But Kaunitz declared the alliance impossible. The Emperor, therefore, listened to the urgent request of Catherine of Russia that he would join her in the Turkish War which had broken out in August 1787.

The ideas of Catherine were somewhat alarming. Ever since the Peace of Kütschuk Kainardji, she had been intent on her Turkish project. She aimed not only at extending the Russian frontier along the coast of the Black Sea, but also dreamt of forming a Greek empire at Constantinople, which should be conferred on her infant grandson. He had already been christened Constantine ; Greek nurses had been provided for him ; and medals struck representing the destruction of the mosque at Constantinople by lightning. The realization of her plan would certainly not be to the interest of Austria, yet the predominant position of Russia made Joseph seek her alliance in the hope of strengthening his hand against his rebellious subjects. Accordingly, after some hesitation, he joined her in the war against the Porte.

The Allies were not at first successful. Russia had been taken at a disadvantage by the unexpected conduct of the Turk in first declaring war, and was hampered by the attack of Gustavus of Sweden, who was stirred up by the members of the Triple Alliance. Joseph had not the gifts of a successful general, and, besides, was seriously out of health. In the autumn of 1789, however, the tide began to turn. Catherine, by rousing Denmark against Gustavus, diverted his attention, and thus was able to send Suwaroff, her best general, to the Turkish war. Joseph retired from the campaign, and left the command in the hands of Loudoun, the best of the Austrian generals ; and while Suwaroff pushed down through Wallachia and Moldavia, Loudoun beat back the Turks, and laid siege to Belgrade (Oct. 1789).

Elsewhere fortune was declaring against the Emperor. The revolt in the Netherlands had marched apace. The Austrian troops had been forced to evacuate Brussels, and fall back on the last stronghold, Luxemburg. Hungary was

THE EASTERN  
POLICY OF  
CATHERINE II

JOSEPH JOINS  
RUSSIA IN THE  
TURKISH WAR,  
FEB. 1788

on the point of rising ; and Prussia, eager to take advantage of Joseph's difficulties, was thinking of intervening.

At this moment Joseph passed away. He had returned from the Turkish war a dying man, and since then he had been racked with pain. His last moments were tortured by the conviction of utter failure. DEATH OF JOSEPH II., FEB. 1790 'One thought', he said, 'oppresses me, that, after all my trouble, I have made but few happy and many ungrateful.' He wrote to Leopold, his brother, who was to succeed him, bidding him take immediate steps to close the Turkish war, and pacify his distracted country, and urging him to hurry up from Tuscany, and see him ere he died. But Leopold delayed until too late. Joseph's favourite niece came, indeed, only to die in childbed, partly from the shock ; and Kaunitz, though he still corresponded with his master, could not overcome his superstitious dislike to visit a dying man.

Few deathbeds present a more pathetic picture than that of the Emperor. Death in the moment of success is terrible enough, but death in the midst of failure was Joseph's fate. 'Here lies the man who never succeeded in anything he attempted', this was the epitaph which he said should be engraved upon his tomb. The historian of to-day may point out that his work was not wholly useless ; that some of his reforms, more especially with regard to the serfs in Austrian lands, survived him ; and that, if the rest were premature, many were carried out successfully later on. Yet, when all is said, the Emperor's verdict cannot be gainsaid. The fate of this interesting, though unfortunate, personality symbolizes the failure of the Enlightened Despot. It shows us how difficult it is for any ruler to understand his people's needs, or to do for them what they had better do themselves. It warns us that reforms will rarely be accepted at a despot's nod which, though good in themselves, do violence to existing interests and deep-rooted prejudices.

Leopold, the brother of Joseph II, who succeeded him, was well fitted for the task entrusted to him. LEOPOLD II., 1790-1792 As Grand Duke of Tuscany, which Joseph had ceded to him, he had shown himself a capable and

enlightened ruler. Though he had none of Joseph's idealism, he was a far more prudent man, and had considerable gifts as a statesman. In accordance with the last injunctions of his brother, he had not much difficulty in conciliating the Hungarians and his Austrian subjects by restoring the government as it had been at the death of Maria Theresa.

Prussia had now to be dealt with. Frederick William had long been wavering as to the policy he should adopt. His ambassador at the Turkish Court urged a definite alliance with the Turk. Sweden, he declared, would join the League owing to her hostility to Russia. Poland might be roused; even Holland and England might be induced to join in opposing the Austro-Russian alliance, and a formidable league be thus made. But the Prussian King was unwilling to take so bold a step, and listened instead to the advice of Hertzberg, an old minister of Frederick the Great. Hertzberg advised him to take the part of the honest broker, which his predecessor had played so successfully at the time of the first partition of Poland. The scheme was briefly this. Turkey might be induced to cede all territories north of the Danube to Russia and to Austria, on condition of her other possessions being guaranteed to her. Austria, in return, should restore Galicia to Poland, and Prussia should be rewarded for her mediation by the grant of Danzig and Thorn by Poland. Thus Europe would be pacified, and Prussia would gain the two important towns which she had failed to get at the first partition of Poland.

Of this somewhat fantastical proposal Leopold made short work. Nothing, he declared, would induce him to acquiesce. Rather than that he would make peace with Turkey at any price, he would surrender part of the Netherlands to France, and with her help reconquer the rest, and then let Prussia look to herself. Frederick William was not the man to face a war in which he was unlikely to find allies. He withdrew

his proposal, and promised, at the Treaty of Reichenbach, to vote for Leopold at the coming Imperial election.

TREATY OF  
REICHENBACH,  
27 JULY, 1790

Having thus disposed of Prussia, Leopold soon recovered his authority in the Netherlands. The insurgents had broken



into two factions, an aristocratic and a republican, which were quarrelling. Leopold was therefore able to reoccupy Brussels, England, Holland and Prussia offered their mediation; and the Netherlands were forced to accept the promise of Leopold to cancel all the changes which Joseph had introduced. Finally, Leopold closed the Turkish War by the

PEACE OF SIS- Peace of Sistovo, and contented himself with  
TOVO, AUG. 1791 the acquisition of Orsova on the Danube. In

August 1791, Catherine had made peace with Gustavus III. The war with Turkey continued somewhat longer. But Catherine was disturbed at the course which the Revolution was taking in France, and wished to have her hands free.

TREATY OF Accordingly, in January 1792, she consented  
JASSY, JAN. 1792 to the Treaty of Jassy on condition that the  
Russian boundary should be extended to the Dniester.

Europe was once more at peace, yet three months had scarce elapsed before war broke out between France and Austria, a war which was soon to involve all the Powers of Europe, and which was not finally closed for three and twenty years.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE

**L**OUIS XVI was only twenty years of age when he succeeded his grandfather. In private morals he presents a pleasing contrast to the worthless Louis XV. He was virtuous, honest and well-meaning. Yet his education had been neglected, he had no knowledge of affairs, and he had no natural ability, no initiative, no force of will. He was even deficient in dignity and in presence. In quiet times he might have been an amiable nonentity, but he was utterly unfitted to guide his country at this crisis.

ACCESSION OF  
LOUIS XVI,  
MAY 1774

Nevertheless, the foreign policy of France, so long as it was directed by Vergennes, was not unsuccessful. The Count of Vergennes, who became Foreign Minister at the accession of Louis XVI, had a good grasp of European affairs, which he had acquired in his long service as a diplomat. We have already noticed his alliance with Gustavus III, and his activity in the matter of the Bavarian succession and exchange (cf. pp. 189, 194), all of which raised the reputation of French diplomacy. But it is his policy towards England that deserves the greatest credit.

POLICY OF  
VERGENNES,  
1774-1787

The revolt of the American colonies, which began in 1775, belongs rather to English than to foreign history; and cannot be dealt with here, except in so far as it concerned the rest of Europe, and the foreign relations of England. The view of the situation held by Vergennes displays considerable insight. If the combatants were left to settle the matter by themselves, the success of either would endanger the remaining French

THE WAR OF  
AMERICAN IN-  
DEPENDENCE,  
1775-1783

and Spanish colonies. It was therefore important to assist the rebels. In this way France would be able to revenge herself on England, and regain some of her colonies lost in the Seven Years' War, while the Americans, under an obligation to France, would not interfere with her colonial expansion. At the same time it would be rash openly to espouse their cause, until it seemed likely to succeed. Vergennes, therefore, at first confined himself to secret support in the way of money and volunteers, and did not join them openly till February 1778. Even then the condition of his alliance was that the Americans should not make peace till their independence was recognized. He then induced Spain to join him (April 1779). To the Americans this assistance was invaluable.

FRANCE OPENLY  
JOINS THE  
AMERICAN  
COLONIES, FEB.  
1778

Indeed it may be doubted whether without it they would have succeeded. Not only did it furnish them with men and money, but with a navy, and a navy which, owing to the exertions of Choiseul, was able to meet the English. Certainly the final capitulation of Lord Cornwallis at York Town would not have occurred had not the French fleet at that moment held the Chesapeake Bay and cut off all hopes of relief, while a superior French force hemmed him in on land.

CORNWALLIS  
CAPITULATES  
AT YORK TOWN,  
OCT. 1781

Nor did the activity of Vergennes stop there. Spain was induced to join in the war and to attack Gibraltar, and the rest of Europe was encouraged to form the Armed Neutrality. The members of this League demanded that the existing rules of international law with respect to neutral vessels should be altered. First, paper blockades should no longer be acknowledged; that is to say, no belligerent should seize a neutral vessel entering an enemy's port unless it were effectively blockaded by the presence of a ship of war. Secondly, the flag covers the goods; that is, no goods of a belligerent on a neutral vessel should be taken except contraband of war, and contraband should be strictly limited to food supplies and munitions of war. Such an alteration would impair the advantages of the command of the sea.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> England accepted these alterations at the Peace of Paris, 1870, and made further concessions in the matter of contraband in the Con-

None of the Powers proceeded to hostilities except Holland, where the quarrel was complicated by other questions. Yet the dispute prevented England from finding any allies, and she was thus left to carry on her desperate struggle alone.

TREATY OF  
VERSAILLES,  
JAN.-SEPT. 1783 In 1783 she submitted to the inevitable, and the American colonies were lost. In the naval war, however, which accompanied the closing scenes, England was not unsuccessful. The victory of Rodney over De Grasse off Dominica (12 April, 1782), and Howe's relief of Gibraltar (Oct. 1782) restored English supremacy at sea. At the Peace of Versailles

she only lost St. Lucia and Tobago in the West Indies, and Senegal in Africa, to France, while ceding West Florida and Minorca to Spain.

The surrender of Minorca weakened England's hold in the Mediterranean; the loss of her American colonies seemed to herald the decline of her colonial power. She was isolated in Europe, while France had gained both materially and in prestige.

If, however, we turn to home affairs, it may be asked whether France had not paid too high a price for her success abroad. The Americans had appealed to the HOME POLICY  
OF LOUIS XVI 'Rights of Man' in justification of their revolt. Rousseau had already raised that cry in France, and it was now strengthened by the example of her new ally. It is significant that the Marquis de Lafayette, one of the most prominent men in the early days of the French Revolution, had served in America, and thenceforth became a popular hero in France. The alliance of an effete and despotic monarchy with a young and vigorous democracy, which was based on such ideas, was full of danger. The expenses of the war had increased the public debt, and it was pretty certain that unless bankruptcy could be avoided, and reforms instantly taken in hand, the monarchy would fall.

It was here that the weakness of Louis XVI was most fatal.

vention of London (1911) which, however, was never ratified. The concessions were applied in the earlier stages of the Great War and probably saved Europe from the intervention of the United States on the side of Germany.

He had, indeed, at the beginning of his reign found in Turgot, a Comptroller-General who might have saved the situation. Turgot had been Intendant in the province of Limousin, and, from his experience there, had conceived a well-constructed plan. The remedy for the financial difficulties was not, he said, to be sought for in bankruptcy or repudiation of debt, in the increase of taxes or in loans, but in economy and reform. To effect this, the abuses in the collection of the revenue should be removed and sinecures abolished; the 'corvée', or forced labour on the roads, should cease, and the inequality of the 'gabelle', or salt tax, should be remedied.

To meet the deficit which would thus be caused, the privileges of exemption, enjoyed by the nobles, the clergy and others, should be done away with, and a single tax on land should be imposed on all classes according to the value of their land. On the subject of trade policy Turgot was at heart in sympathy with the 'Economists', a school of publicists, who might be called the Cobdenites of the day. The most notable of these writers was Gournay, who will go down to history as the author of the celebrated phrase 'Laissez faire, laissez passer'. Gournay was a Free Trader *pur sang*, and although Turgot could not go as far as Gournay would have liked, even had he wished to do so, nevertheless his attempted reforms are all in the direction of a breakaway from Colbertism. He held, for instance, that free trade in corn within the country should be once more allowed (cf. p. 15), the customs duties lowered and simplified, all guilds declared illegal, and other restraints on the freedom of trade and industry removed. Although Turgot was no believer in popular legislation, and still wished to retain all legislative powers in the hands of the King and his council, he wanted to establish an ascending scale of elected assemblies of the village, the arrondissement or district, the province and the nation. The functions of these assemblies would be as with our district and county councils, to give information to the central authority and to administer the royal edicts.

The plan of Turgot is no doubt open to objections. His idea of a single tax on land was based on the erroneous

theory of de Quesnay and the Physiocrats, that land alone was the source of wealth. It is true that as agricultural products are the first necessities of life, the demand for and therefore the prices of manufactured commodities are in the long run determined by the condition of agriculture and of the prices obtainable for corn, meat, wool, etc. The error made by the Physiocrats was in assuming that the interests of agriculture and industry were opposed to each other, whereas, in fact, they are complementary. Capital and industry of all kinds are equally productive of wealth. Wealth is anything that has value, and everything has value which satisfies human wants, and is not obtainable without effort. Many things answer men's needs besides those directly produced from land. Thus the industry which spins and weaves the wool or grinds the corn into flour increases wealth, since cloth and flour are more valuable than raw wool and corn. Turgot would therefore have been on sounder ground had he made all forms of wealth equally liable to taxation. Yet it was a great thing to abolish the meaningless, unjust and harmful exemptions which existed, and if the time ever came, as it surely would, when the people would demand a share in legislative power, the plan of Turgot was a move in the right direction. Something would have been done to mitigate the extreme centralization of the government, and the people would have received meanwhile an education and a discipline. They would have learnt the difficulties of government and the danger of pure theory without the chastening, sobering influence which experience alone can give.

Turgot at all events was not allowed to try his plan. Like many reformers, he had little tact and no conciliatory gifts. He was dictatorial and impatient of opposition and delay, and his enemies made use of his unpopularity to defeat him. The edict allowing free trade in corn within the kingdom led to grave discontent as it had before. An unfruitful year was followed by high prices in some places. The dealers took advantage of the edict to buy up corn at cheap rates where it was plentiful and to sell it where it was dear, and thus neither producer nor consumer seemed to derive benefit.

This was inevitable, but in time competition would have partly cured the evil; and Turgot stood firm. Of the discontent thus caused the privileged classes made good use, and denounced his other schemes. Unfortunately, Louis XVI had recalled the 'Parlement' of Paris. They too joined in the cry, for they were among the privileged, and refused to register the other edicts. Maurepas, the chief minister, supported the opposition, and the weak King, after much hesitation, dismissed his unpopular Comptroller-General.

TURGOT DIS-  
MISSED, MAY  
1776

The King now listened to the tempting promises of Necker, a Genevan Protestant and banker. As, however, no Protestant could hold the highest offices of State, Necker was only appointed Director of Finances. Turgot had objected to loans, Necker sought safety in further borrowing. This would give him time to carry out the economies he desired as much as Turgot. Meanwhile, by publishing a balance sheet (*compte rendu*) of the public finances he hoped to re-establish confidence. There was something to be said for thus courting publicity. The country would at least know the worst, and the privileged classes might be thus induced to abandon their privileges. Necker indeed attempted to show that the financial position was not so bad as was supposed. Further scrutiny, however, proved that many items had been omitted, and that his estimates were fallacious. The publishing of the balance sheet therefore only increased the dismay and deepened the discontent.<sup>1</sup> Necker, finding that he was losing power, demanded to be admitted to the ministry, and on this being refused, resigned. The only result of his administration was the establishment of three Provincial Assemblies somewhat after the plan suggested by Turgot, which lasted until the Revolution, and which he had intended to extend to the whole of France.

After the fall of Necker a feverish period ensued of distracted councils and vacillating policy; the King listening

<sup>1</sup> One may compare the connexion between the publication of the May Report and the formation of the National Government in England in 1931.

now to the party of reaction, now making some feeble attempt at reform. Under Calonne, who was appointed  
CALONNE, 1783-1787 in 1783, the expenses of government and of court increased, and the ruinous system of loans was again resorted to, until at last Calonne was forced to confess that he could not even pay the interest on the debt. He fell back on Turgot's ideas, and advised the summoning of a  
THE COUNCIL OF NOTABLES Council of Notables to sanction his proposals. The council, which was for the most part formed of the privileged classes, instead of supporting him, attacked his financial policy and forced the King to drive him from office. His successor, Leomény de Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, now induced the Notables to accept some of Calonne's proposals, but, as they declined to approve of a general land tax, and demanded the convocation of the States-general, they were dismissed. A final effort was made to obtain the registration of the royal edicts by the 'Parlement' of Paris. The 'Parlement' refused once more and repeated the demand of the Notables that the States-general should be called. Louis XVI took them at their word. The  
NECKER RECALLED, AUG. 1788, AND STATES-GENERAL SUMMONED 'Parlements' of France were declared suppressed, Necker was recalled, and the meeting of the States-general was announced for 1 May, 1789. With the opening of that famous assembly, which had never sat since 1614, the French Revolution began.

The period which thus closes with the outbreak of the French Revolution may be called the Age of the Enlightened  
THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT IN THEORY AND PRACTICE Despot. This theory of government had indeed been heard of in earlier ages, but at no time had it so many exponents. The phrase itself is first used by Quesnay, who believed in this system of government. Parliaments, he declared, only produce discord; for economic reform the iron hand of the autocrat is essential. If we omit England, where power, since the Revolution of 1688, had been in the hands of an aristocratic parliament, every country of Europe, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, felt the influence of the idea, either in the person of the ruler himself, or in that of the minister



who controlled his policy. It will therefore be helpful if we conclude this volume with a summary of the general motives which underlay the theory, and of the work accomplished by its advocates; and with an inquiry into its necessary limitations, and the causes of its partial failure.

The three main principles which underlay the conception were: (1) the identification of the State with its ruler; (2) the subordination of all private interests to those of the State; (3) the assumption that the interest or advantage of the State was a sufficient justification for every public act. In the foreign policy of the day we find that statesmen no longer concerned themselves much with the legality of the claims made to any piece of territory, but urged rather the imperative necessity of its acquisition to the safety or prosperity of their country. The theory of the balance of power, a theory once advocated in the defence of small States, was now made an excuse for the aggrandizement of the more powerful. The despots sought to attain their ends by the wiles of a dishonest diplomacy, or, if that failed, by an appeal to arms, in which they bade for the alliance of other Powers as selfish as themselves. No other King equalled Frederick the Great in the cynical frankness with which he avowed his motives and his methods, but most statesmen adopted his principles and followed his example. Hence the intricate network of diplomacy; hence the constant alliances and counter-alliances which change with the variety of a kaleidoscope; hence the never-ending wars and hence the acts of spoliation, of which the partition of Poland is, perhaps, the most shameless, but certainly not the only example.

It is no doubt true that a worse cause for war may easily be found than the 'imperative interests of a country', but many of the aggressions of the period cannot be justified on these grounds, while 'nationality' as we understand to-day was not yet one of the current ideas of the day. France is still powerful and prosperous, though she no longer holds the basin of the Rhine, nor rules over Spain, as was desired by Louis XIV; while a reformed Poland need not have stood in the way of the development of Russia and of Austria.

But if there is much to condemn in the foreign policy of the Enlightened Despots, it must be allowed that many of them had done great things for their country. France certainly gained materially from the conquests of Louis XIV, though perhaps at too great a cost.

Prussia could never have been a great Power without the acquisitions of the Great Elector and of the Great Frederick, nor Russia without a door to the West.

If we turn from questions of foreign policy to those at home, there is much truth in the boast that the Enlightened Despot aimed at the welfare of his country, and that the cry 'All for the people' was not wholly false. Prussia owed her rise entirely to her great rulers. Peter the Great may have misconceived the true line on which Russia should develop; Joseph II was no doubt too hasty in his reforms; yet no one can dispute the sincerity of either of these remarkable men. The aims of these absolute monarchs we have already seen; they were largely those of the political philosophers of their day. They wished to destroy the power of the nobles, and to substitute for the government by the privileged a centralized system, worked chiefly by the middle class, yet under the absolute control of the ruler himself. The energies of this government should then be devoted to the advance of the material and moral conditions of their people. Serfdom and other feudal abuses should be abolished or softened. The undue influence of the Church should be restrained, and a wider toleration of opinion allowed. The laws and judicial procedure should be simplified and made more equitable. Education should be encouraged; and, finally, industry and commerce should be promoted by direct government action.

But good intentions will not alone suffice. The despot must also be wise enough and well-informed enough to realize what are the true interests of his people. His government, it has been said, must be 'directed by a will superior alike to majority and minority, to interests and classes. It is to be the intellectual guide of the nation, the promoter of wealth, the teacher of knowledge, the guardian of morality, the mainstay of the ascending movement of man'. In the

pursuit of this aim the people are to be ruled, not as they wish to be, but as their master thinks they should be. He is to be the arbiter of right and wrong, and no one is to gainsay his will. Even if such a standing miracle may here and there be found, the people will be kept in a state of pupillage, character will be weakened, and the education and discipline, which the practice of self-government and the play of free opinion alone can give, must inevitably be lost.

But such rulers are rare, at least are not to be secured under a system of hereditary succession.

Nor is this all. The conditions of society are so complex, and its interests so varied, that no one man can master them all, or conduct the details of administration without help. Enemy as he is to all forms of popular self-government, he is obliged to surround himself with councillors and with an elaborate system of boards or departments of administration. As long as the despot is himself capable and well-meaning he may be able to control this huge machine and direct it in the public interest. When, however, as must, sooner or later, inevitably be the case, a less devoted or a weak man succeeds, the machinery is used for bad ends, as was the case in France under Louis XV ; or is likely to get out of gear and fall into confusion, as was the case in Prussia after the death of Frederick. Moreover, as we have noticed in the case of France and of Russia after the death of Peter the Great, the members of the bureaucracy surround themselves with the privileges of an almost hereditary caste. They become the slaves of custom and of precedent, and the selfish enemies of all reform, while they are often themselves divided by faction and personal rivalries.

Under these influences the despotism ceases to be either reforming or enlightened ; it has long ago alienated the sympathy of the noble classes by the attack made on their privileges, and it now ceases to be popular among those whom it was originally intended to benefit. Such was the fate which threatened, if it had not already overcome, most of the so-called Enlightened Despotisms at the close of the eighteenth century. In Russia the power of the Tzarina Catherine was still unassailed, but the bureaucracy had

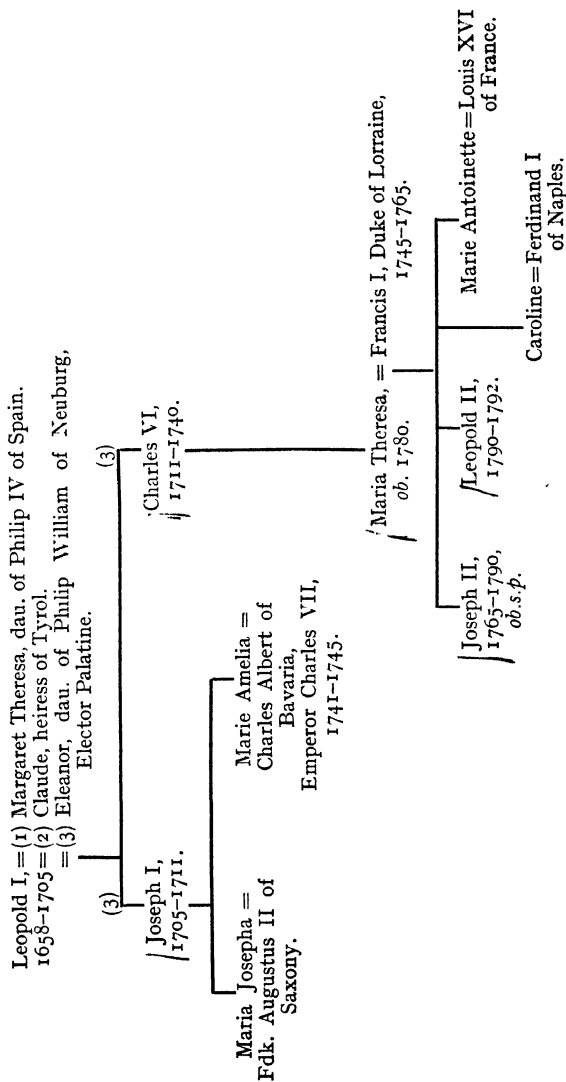
already exercised its baneful influence. Austria, shaken to her very foundations by the rash innovations of Joseph II, was indeed recovering herself under the more prudent guidance of Leopold II, but was soon to fall into the hands of weaker rulers. Prussia had lost the controlling mind of Frederick the Great, and was under the feeble and superstitious rule of Frederick William II. In Spain, the capable Charles III was soon to be succeeded by the worthless Charles IV. The proud monarchy of France, exhausted by Louis XIV, and ruined by the carelessness and profligacy of Louis XV, had fallen to pieces in the hands of the vacillating though well-meaning Louis XVI, and the Revolution had begun.

The Enlightened Despot had failed. The future was to show whether governments based on popular representation would do any better. For the moment the Revolution gave political rights to all alike, but the Enlightened Despot had not prepared their people how to use those rights. And the Philosophers who had contributed so largely to the fall of the old régime had been critical but not constructive. Hence the Revolution, of which they were acclaimed the Prophets, quickly took a form of which they would none of them have approved, but for which they had undoubtedly prepared the way.

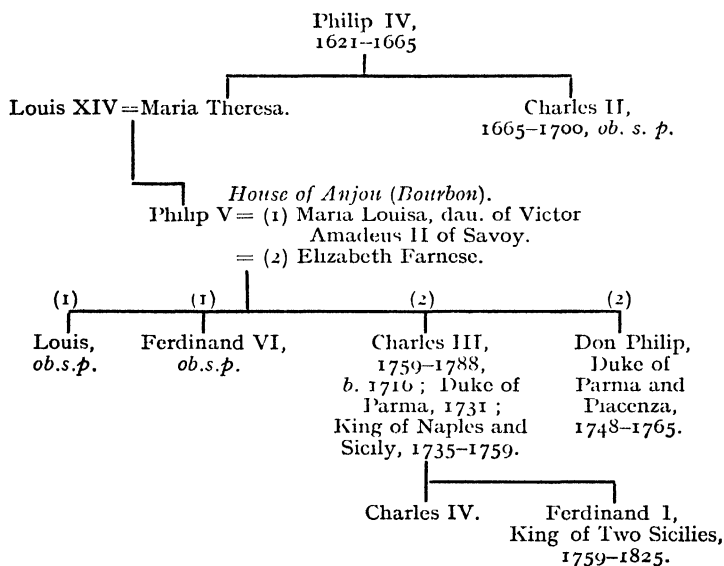




## THE HABSBURGS IN AUSTRIA

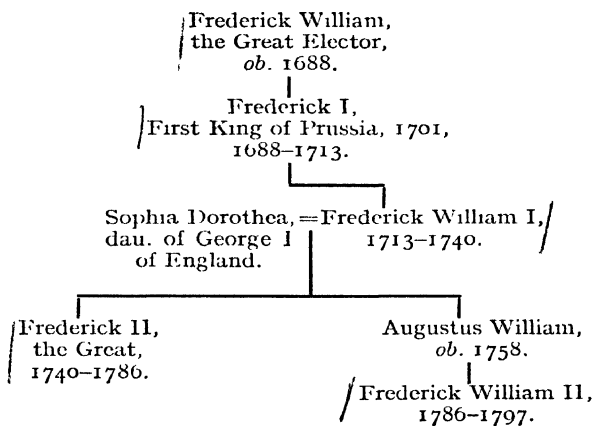


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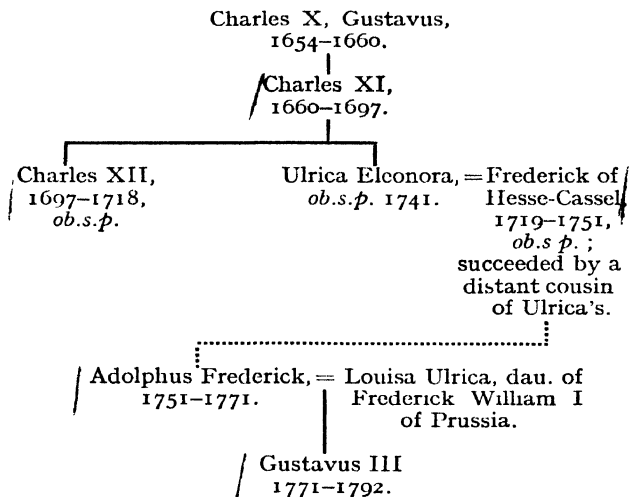




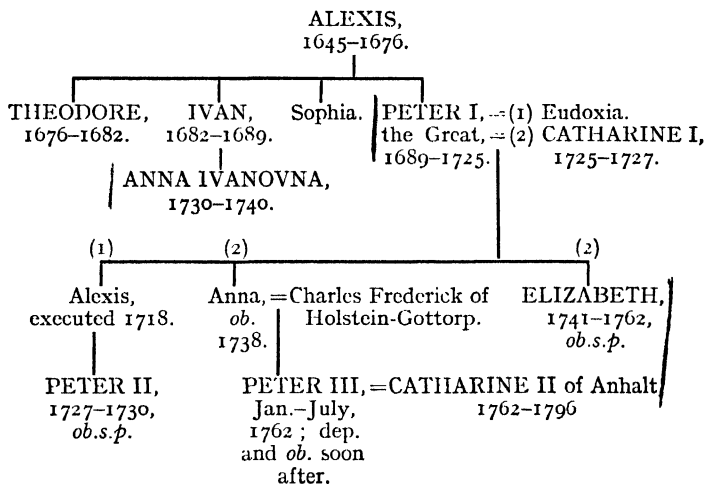
## HOHENZOLLERN KINGS OF PRUSSIA



## SWEDEN. HOUSE OF VASA



## RUSSIA. HOUSE OF ROMANOFF



ELECTORS OF SAXONY AND KINGS OF POLAND.  
HOUSE OF WETTIN

John George II,  
1656-1680.

|  
John George III,  
1680-1691.

|  
John George IV,  
1691-1694.

|  
Frederick Augustus I,  
1694-1733 ;  
King of Poland, 1697-1733.

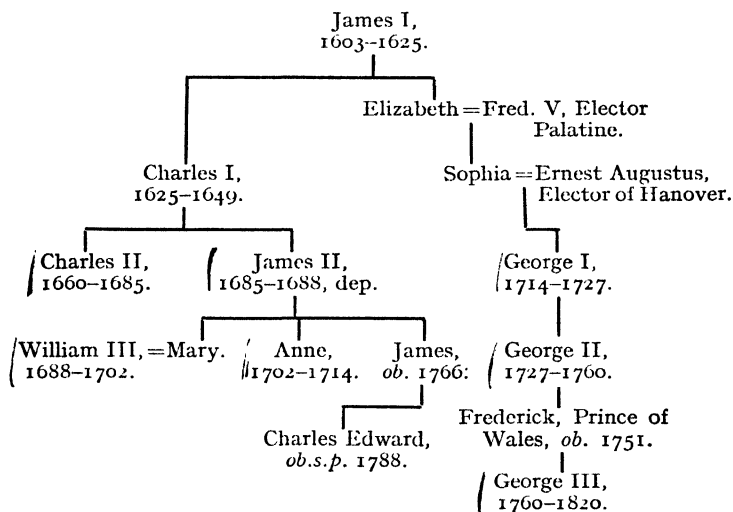
|  
Frederick Augustus II,  
1733-1763 ;  
King of Poland, 1738-1763 ;  
succeeded by  
Stanislas Poniatowski.

ELECTORS OF BAVARIA. HOUSE OF  
WITTELSBACH

Maximilian Emanuel,  
1679-1726.

|  
Charles Albert,  
1726-1745 ;  
Emperor 1742, as Charles VII

|  
Maximilian Joseph,  
1745-1777.  
*ob.s.p.* ;  
succeeded by Charles Theodore,  
Elector Palatine.

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AND HANOVER



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